A PILGRIMS' GUIDE
TO
GURUVAYOOR

1980

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GURUVAYOOR

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Pilgrim's Guide to Guruvayoor

Written by: S. P. NAYAR, B.A,B.L

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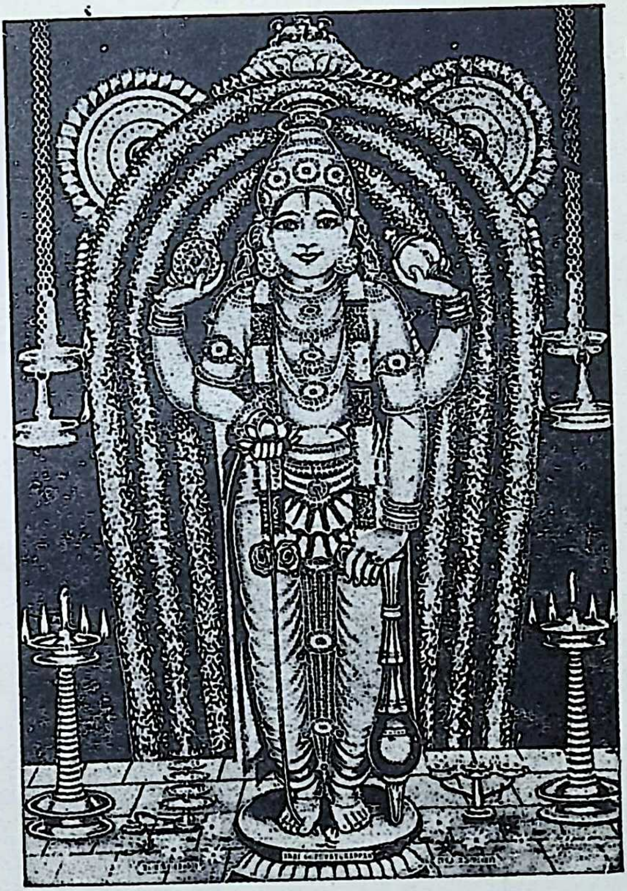

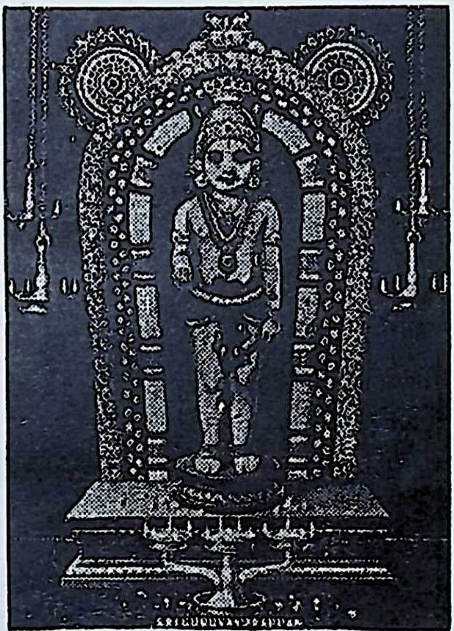

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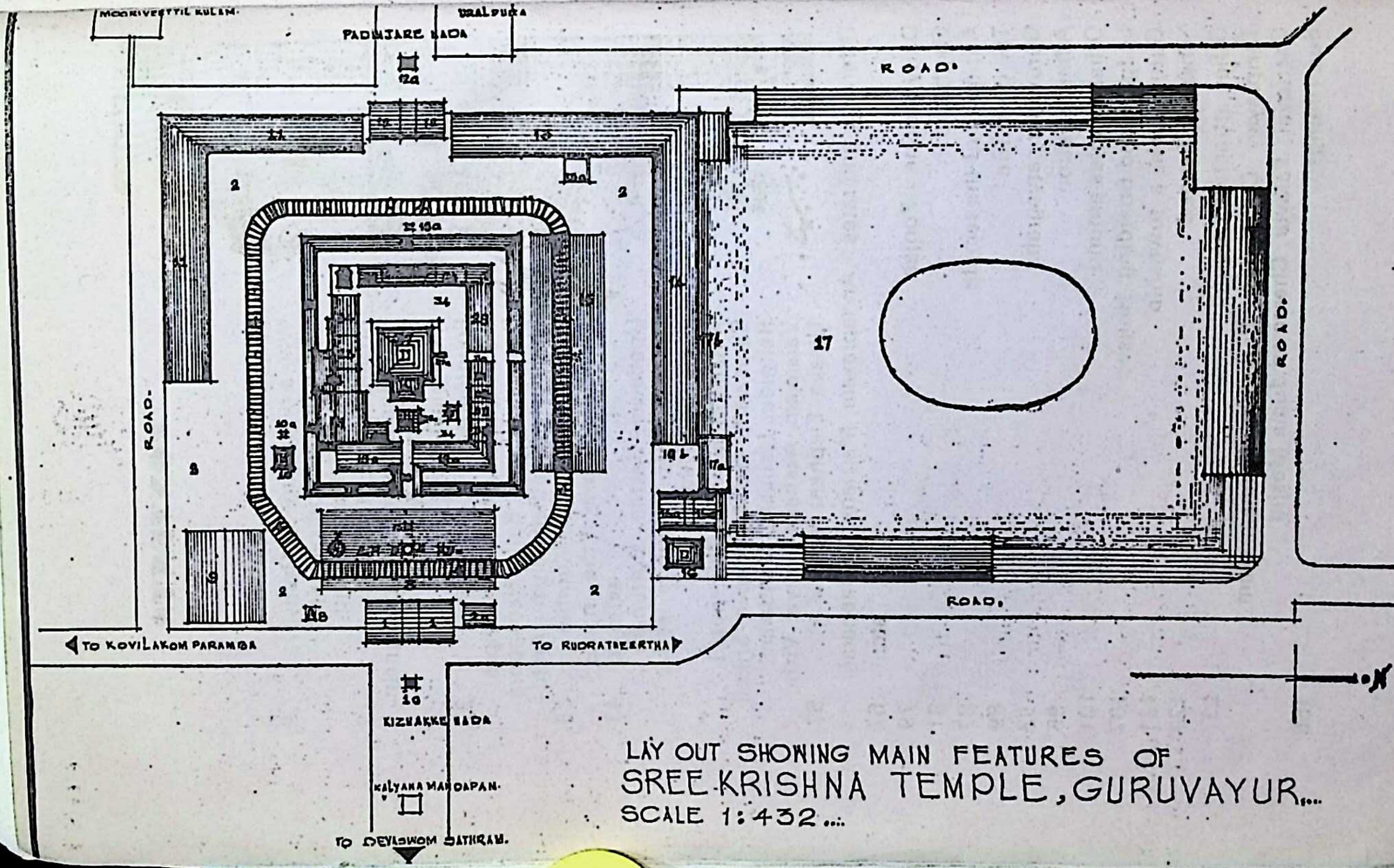
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LAY OUT SHOWING MAIN FEATURES OF
SREE KRISHNA TEMPLE, GURUVAYUR...
SCALE 1:432...

Prologue

Sree Narayana Bhattapada Muni astounded by the mercy of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan thus spoke "*Hanta Bhagyam Jananam*" (Alas' the blessedness of Guruvayoor inhabitants).

Life, these days, is fraught with trials and tribulations. Getting a morsal of food being a problem, for millions, and the bulk of humans having been compelled to live beneath the poverty line; where, then, is the question of yearning for *bliss supreme*? We hear of Saints having reached esoteric perfection of the Upanishadic identity with Brahman, the universal soul. That is anachronistic in this era of inequilibrium of mind and soul. UDARA NIMITHAM BAHUKRITHA VESHAM is the rhyme of the day.

The specific panacea for the contemporary ills of society and moral rearmament is declared by saints to be visits to Holy places (Pilgrimages) and Namasankeertan.

-Contd-

No wonder, thus, that places like Guruvayoor assume larger significance today, as man has little time to devote to the pursuits of other arduous disciplines.

Today Guruvayoor has become a star attraction for large congregations of Bhaktas, comprising *Gnani*, *Jignasu* *Seeker after wealth* (Kami) and the *sufferer* and others, as stressed in the Gita. Relevant to each of these modes and shades of Bhakti, we find a wide range of religious activities in Guruvayoor and laced with its great traditions and *Sthalapurana*, Guruvayoor has become a strong magnet attracting pil grims from all over India, particularly from other neighbouring states. And hence the need for a good Guide- cum - source book on Guruvayoor and our own efforts to satisfy *it*.

Not that the existing Guide books are unequal; nor that the author lays extraordinery claims to journalistic excellence. that he has been inspired to write this volume. The impelling urge has been to compliment the vacuum left by the other available publications and be of service to Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan and His Bhaktas. The author may vouchsafe that the present attempt is with a difference; in that, special efforts have been put in to make it an exhaustive source-book containing a wide range of relevant topics, as the contents would reveal.

Every possible effort to bring out this edition without factual inaccuracies and monstrocities has been made. However this edition being the maiden one and as the author had to race against time, to make available the edition for dedication at the feet of Sri Guruvayoorappen on Vishu day some mistakes have crept in and the "*Devil*." has had its conspicious share in view of the non-availability of skilled workers in the place.

Our intention was to make the publication a luminous rather than a voluminous one. No doubt we had to eschew many essentials for fear of authenticity of sources and paucity of space hoping to improve on this in our next edition.

We are grateful to all those who have extended a hand of cooperation and assistance, particularly to our advertisers, and dedicate this book to the Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent Sri Guruvayoorappan on this auspicious Vishu day.

S. P. Nayar,
For Progressive Printers & Publishers
Guruvayoor.

14-4-1980.

WHY A PILGRIMAGE TO GURUVAYOOR

That indescribable and incomparable acme of happiness, ecstatic and sublime, limitless in terms of time and space, that which confers eternal salvation on all who seek it, that which is so fervently eulogised in superlatives in the Vedas and other Holy Scriptures; that which is formless and yet with a firm form that which bestows all that is great and enduring when avidly sought by the devotees; that which is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient; it is that Brahman that is presiding, in a living form, in the Guruvayoor Temple. Indeed mankind is beholden to Heaven for the good fortune to behold that great deity inside the Guruvayoor Temple. To be born as human and to worship the Deity inside Guruvayoor Temple is in itself a fulfilment of Life's mission.

The above is more or less a paraphrase of the opening stanzaa of Sri Narayana Bhattathiri's monumental work *Narayaneeyam*.

Today, mankind is passing through a great crisis. A myriad problems; social, political, economic and personal are haunting man, inspite of his tall claims and vain pride in his great achievements in the continuous conquest of nature and the advancement in Science and technology. To live in this great time of Scientific progress and material prosperity should otherwise have been a great blessing in itself. But none of these things makes man happy in the real sense. He is never free from the clutches of the "*octapus*" of his own creation. And since man is given to the pursuits of material splendour; the more he acquires it, the more he gets enmeshed in the welter of his insecure living, devoid of any mental peace or lasting satisfaction. He finds himself caught unawares by the plenitude of his own prosperity. Why? Because, the material prosperity notwithstanding, there has not been a harmonious development in man. The secular forces and material progress have failed to bring in their wake an intellectually and spiritually integrated outlook in man which alone would have made life worth-living. In the language of Albert Einsteen, "we have today the perfection of means but there is also an increasing confusion of ends." It is well said that "where wealth accumulates, men decay." Physically man is degraded by rich, elaborate, and artificial food, cosy comforts, and the ever-increasing dependence on mechanical amenities of life. And mentally, he is a victim of hypertension, unrest, split-personality, frustration and other neurotic and physical ailments. Intellectually, he has been cynical, hedonistic and sceptical. Spiritually, he is atheistic or dogmatic, or agnostic or nihilistic. This is quite an alarming state of things. But all is not lost. There is still scope for hope; the outlook is not quite as bleak as it appears. Man still can redeem himself with an introspective synthesis of the inner and outer refinements and by orchestrating his inner faculties and finer feelings make an integrated man; spiritually awakened, mentally alert, morally upright and materially well off;

He is in the indisputable possession of vast and ever growing power, and the material gifts he has amassed can be pressed to transform the world into one of idyllic felicity. The infinite possibility of infinite good graciously appears on the horizon of man's destiny and if only he tends to tune his mind and intellect towards God as the ultimate source of his solace it would indeed be a propitious augury of his physical, mental and spiritual perfection. He is living already in the lap of meterial comfort with enough and more to satisfy his basic needs like food and shelter. Meterial prosperity is not harmful in itself; on the contrary, it can even be helpful in the attainment of everlasting happiness, if it is advantageously made use of in an adventure into religious life.

Swamy Vivekananda said that "One cannot preach Religion to the hungry millions." He added that "to the hungry, God appears in the form of bread." Meterial prosperity eliminates hunger and meets all the physical needs of man. It is said in the scriptures that KALIYUGA is ideally suited for a life of devotion and spiritual uplift. It is true that there are innumerable negative forces, but one can still weave cosmos out of this chaos. Cultivation of a devotional attitude with its concomitants of *Bhajan, Worship, Pilgrimage* to holy places,*recital of Divine names, Sankeerthan and Satsangh* are the recipes recommended by the scriptures and their exponents as the surest means, in Kaliyuga, for attaining enlightenment. Among those pilgrim-centres which breathe an air of banefaction and which are concordant with the avowed aims of pilgrimage and worship, *Guruvayoor* in Kerala occupies the place of primacy. The ever-increasing flow of pilgrims from all over India is its eloquent attestation.

* * *

The Origin of the Temple.

The Narada Purana contains a vivid description about the origin of Guruvayoor Temple. Towards the end of the Dwapara Age the Pandavas entrusted the task of governance of the country to their grandson Parikshit and left for good, their capital city Hasthinapura, and finally this mundane world itself. Unfortunately Parikshit had a sorrowful end as he was bitten by TAKSHAKA,the serpent,as a result of a curse by the son of a Sage. Enranged by this the son of Parikshit JANAMEJAYA, wanted to avenge the death of his father. Bent, upon wreaking revenge not only on Takshaka but also on the entire stock of Serpents. Janamejaya started the great SARPA YAGA. One after another all the serpents were syphoned into the sacrificial fire. Last came the turn of Takshaka. He sought shelter at the feet of Indra. Knowing that Takshaka was in no mood to comply with the summons from the Yaga Agni, he intensified his yaga to draw Takshaka alone or along with Indra himself, if it came to that. This was too much for Indra who was frightened and horrified at the grim prospect ahead. So, cowering and cringing he forlornly sought the help of Brihaspathi. the preceptor of the Devas. Thereupon Brihaspathi approached Janamejaya and advised him thus:-

"Oh! King.You cannot kill Takshaka for the simple reason that Takshaka is one who has taken 'Amrit', which confers immortality. All 'beings' are obliged to reap the consequences of their own Karma. No one can escape from this force of Karma. Takshaka was only an instrument of Destiny; he was not actuated by any personal spite against your father. Your grudge against him is unworthy of you. And see; what you have done, in your arrogance and ignorance. You have already killed countless innocent serpents. Therefore stop this harmful yaga and make amends for your ill-advised action". This sagely counsel had its desired effect."

This advice of Brihaspathi put things in proper perspective and janamejaya stopped forthwith the serpent sacrifice. But because of the curse of those serpents, whom he had sacrificed, janamejaya came to be afflicted with a virulent form of leprosy. This filled him with sorrow and anguish. Having lost all appetite for life he was pining away to the inevitable end when Sage Athreya called on him one day. Seeing the King writhing with physical pain and mental remorse, the sage advised Janamejaya to seek refuge in the Temple at GURUVAYOOR. If he were to worship the presiding deity and propitiate Lord Krishna enshrined therein he was bound to be rid of all his afflictions, he said. Then, the sage Athreya gave Janamejaya a treatise on the great powers of the deity and said that the Bhaktas who sought his blessings could secure not only Moksha, but all that they wanted - the wordly as also the other -worldly blessings.

This discourse of Athreya opened a new vista of hope for Janamejaya. Fired with an avid desire to know more and more he pressed the Saint to tell him more about *Guruvayoor*. The sage started narrating the origin of the temple and all about the great deity presiding therein. Thus spoke the Saint:- "Once upon a time there was a royal couple, King Sutapas and his wife. As they were childless they began to worship Lord Brahma to bless them with a child. Eventually Brahma handed the deity, now installed in Guruvayoor, and asked them to worship that deity for the fulfilment of their wish. Following his advice Sutapas and his wife began worshipping this deity and in the end, Lord Vishnu appeared in all His heavenly splendour before them. In reply to their prayers for a child, as graceful as the Lord himself, the Lord said that He Himself would be born as their child in three births, in three different forms, and in three different situations. He also said that they will have the good fortune to worship the same deity in all the three janmas. So revealing himself and blessing the royal couple the Lord disappeared.

"Their first born was PRASNIGARBHAN who gave SANAKA and others a schooling on Brahmacharya. It was Prasnigarbhan who gave the world the great lessons on the powers of celibacy, BRAHMACHARYA VRATHA."

"In their next Janma Sutapas and his wife were born as Kasyapa and Adithi. Then also they had the opportunity of worshipping the same deity. Their son in that janma was Vamana. In their third janma they were born as Vasudeva and Devaki. And they came to possess this deity through the sage Dhoumyan. Lord Krishna was born as their Eighth issue. In the long run Lord Krishna himself installed this deity in a temple in Dwaraka, specially constructed by him. Before leaving this mundane world, the Lord told *Uddhavar* that there would soon be a deluge which would swallow up *Dwaraka* and that he should take care to salvage this idol before it went under. Uddhavar, later told Brihaspathi of the Lord's mandate. But by then the deluge had closed in on Dwaraka."

"But Brihaspathi was able to salvage the idol that was floating on the waves with the assistance of his prime disciple, VAYU. Together with Vayu, Brihaspathi, then set out on a journey in search of a proper place for the installation of the deity. They travelled far and wide on earth, and ultimately came over to Kerala, the land of scenic beauty."

"Amidst the lush-green vegitation they saw a huge tank full of otus, and lord Siva himself enjoying an ablution. Understanding their mission Lord Siva bade them to install the deity close by the lotus tank, as there was no other place on earth as suited as that. Accordingly, the deity was installed by Guru (Brihaspathi) and Vayu, at that particular place, at an auspicious hour. Thus the place and the temple came to be known as Guruvayoor, deriving its significance from sponsors, Guru aud Vayu. It is believed that the original temple that housed the idol was designed by Viswakarma himself."

King Janamejaya was listening to this story with rapt attention. Thereupon he set forth along with Athreya towards Guruvayoor. On reaching Guruvayoor, King Janamejaya began to worship GURUVAYOORAPPAN as the deity is endearingly called. He worshipped the lord with single-minded devotion for forty days and on the 40th night he had a vision of the Lord, telling him that he was cleansed of all his sins and cured of the disease. He felt the divine hand gently going up and down over his diseased body. It was all a dream to Janamejaya. But the next morning he woke up to find that all the ulcers on his body were gone and that he was in the best of health. His happiness knew no bounds. Having obtained a fresh lease of life he returned to his Kingdom, making a niche in his bosom for Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan.

THE PANDYA KING

There is a story of a Pandya King who likewise sought refuge in Guruvayoor, when his astrologer predicted that he would die on a particular day of snake-bite.

The King in his anxiety to escape the impending doom asked whether there was no 'way out'and was told that what was ordained by destiny cannot be undone by any human agency, This reply made him more awe-stricken, and the prospect of his death by snake-bite made his flesh creep. When the King was so given to despair a Malayalee Brahmin who was an employee of his palace advised him to go and seek refuge in Guruvayoor Temple. He told the king "What the Astrologer said was that human efforts cannot obliterate what was ordained by destiny. But what human efforts cannot do, Divine grace could. Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan is enshrined in a living form in the Guruvayoor Temple for the purpose of blessing all those, sinners and saints alike, who go to Him for His mercy. He will not forsake you if you pray for His blessings with single-minded devotion. Oh! King, you can do nothing better than seek refuge at the lotus feet of Sri Guruvayoorappan."

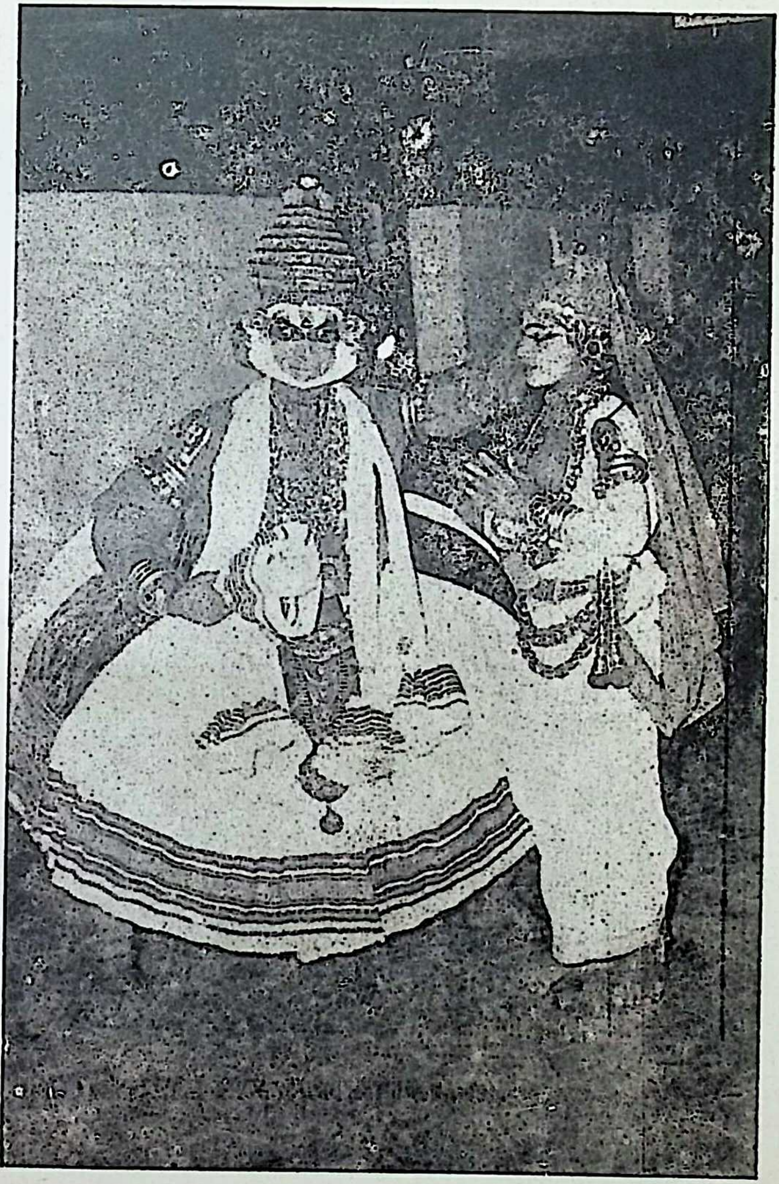
This awakened the inner feelings of the King and he decided to go to Guruvayoor. One thing he was decided upon. If he were to die of snake-bite let it be from within the precincts of the temple, he thought. If so, he would attain *Moksha.* Thus resolved, he went to Guruvayoor and with utmost devotion spent his days till his star-crossed days were over.

As he had addressed himself assiduously to the ascetic life within the temple, attending to all the poojas, the Seevelies (The Deity taken round the temple in procession on an elephant), the prayers and Namasankeertanas, he lost himself in the ecstatic exuberance of the spiritual environs there and he never felt the efflux of time. When he finally knew that he had outlived his ill-starred days without a jolt or jar or anything untoward, he was filled with unbounded happiness. Making solid contributions to the temple for its all-round improvement, he left for his palace, a refined and rehabilitated soul.

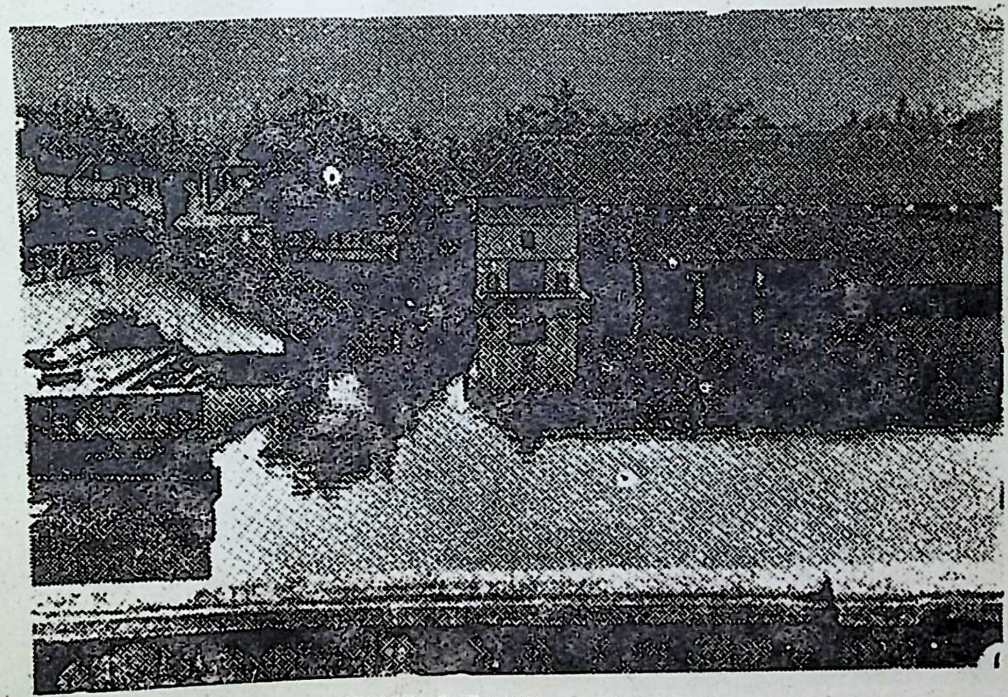
Once he was back in his palace, he sent for the Astrologer. The King wanted to put the Astrologer in his place and tell him that his predictions were all ill-founded and that he was there, all in one piece, hale and healthy, inspite of the Astrologer's ominous prediction. The King said that he was not bitten by any snake and that he had seen no snake at all, till then. The Astrologer was still firm in his views. He asked the King to show him the toe of his right leg. There, he then pointed out to the King the scar left by the tooth of the snake and said that he was indeed bitten by the snake at the predicted hour. But as he was a refugee inside the Guruvayoor Temple and as the Lord himself was riding Garuda, before which all snakes were helpless and powerless, the King had escaped unhurt, without even a faint idea of what had happened. By the grace of Guruvayoorappan the King had overcome his destiny, so miraculously, he said.

Only a few may give credence to these legends now-a-days. Still one can maintain without fear ofcontradiction thatGuruvayoor is one of the oldest temples of the South, where devotees from all walks of life and all parts of India, flock in thousands and feel enthralled by the supreme spiritual atmosphere that envelop the temple and experience a thrill or a rare answer to their fervid prayers. The number of pilgrims who believe in Sri Guruvayoorappan is swelling day by day, enhancing the reputation of the temple as a great pilgrim-centre.

It is said that all the rites and rituals of the temple, the nature and the frequency of the poojas, the offerings and all other details of worship were laid down by ADI SANKARA himself; also, that the great Saint and Seer Sri Vilwa Mangalam had attained his 'Samadhi' inside the *Nalambalam* of the temple. According to recent findings there were many Vilwa Mangalams, not one, as is generally believed. The Vilwa Mangalam, who was the author of *Sri Krishna Karnamritham* lived in the 9th Century A. D. This gives room for the inference that the Guruvayoor Temple was famous even at that time.



KRISHNANATTAM



TEMPLE TANK (another view)

KRISHNANATTAM

There were two other Savants who had seen Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan in a living form, with their naked eyes: one was the great Zamorin, Manavedan and the other, the illustrious devotee-scholar, Narayana Battathiri,the author of the monumental work *Narayaneeyam*. The Zamorin, Manavedan, after his Darshan of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan, composed his classic "Krishna Geethi" in eight chapters, in the style of *Jayadev's* Geetha Govindam. The Krishnattam or Krishnanattam, (a mosaic of folk and classic Arts) a dance-drama, institutionalised and patronised by Guruvayoor Temple has stemmed from this *Krishna Geethi* of Manavedan. This work deals with the Krishnavathar—from Krishna's birth to His final emancipation from worldly chains and ascension to the Heaven. In its orthodox style it is a nine-day programme and is staged at nights. The characters in Krishnanattam are heavily costumed and have many characteristics in common with Kathakali which itself was inspired by Krishnanattam. The costumes and the background orchestra are so designed as to give accent to the LASYA BHAVA which is the key-note in Krishnattam and the main distinguishing mark from Kathakali. Probably, this might be the reason why the *Chenda Vadya* is eschewed in Krishnattam as against the place of primacy it occupies in KATHAKALI. The "Edacka", a sweet, soft, small drum, capable of deep resonance, patronised by all the leading temples of Kerala has replaced the aggressive *Chenda*, probably for imparting a tenderness and a subtle charm to this branch of Dance Drama.

Also Krishnattam lays accent to orchestrated and rhythmic movements of characters and brings out in bold relief, the dance element more than the other dramatic elements. Songs are set to Carnatic music but their rendition is in the *Sopana* style (Also refer to Chapter on "Offerings")

* * *

NARAYANA BHATTATHIRI

The span of Bhattathiri's life overlapped the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century. He was born in the Melpathur illam in a remote village known as Chandanakkavu, in Ponnani Taluk. Ponnani has the singular distinction of having given birth to three great poet-scholars of colossal dimensions. The other two, besides Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiri, were Poet laureate Vallathol and Ezhuthachan, the father of Malayalam literature. The fact that Melpathur should have chosen Guruvayoor, of all places, as the last resort to get relief to the melady that afflicted him, only reflected the great reputation Guruvayoor was enjoying even at that period. (Continued infra)

POONTHANAM

There was yet another great Malayalee Poet, a contemporary of Melpathur, who too was a great devotee of Guruvayoorappan and whose name was intertwined with the legends of Guruvayoor Temple ; POONTHANAM. He belonged to yet another far-off village in the erstwhile Malabar, called Angadippuram, in Valluvanadu Taluk. In the old Malabar Dist: particularly in his home village, there were innumerable temples. But, that Poonthanam too should have loved to worship Guruvayoorappan so regularly and steadfastly, would provide an additional evidence to the far-flung fame of Guruvayoor, even at those remote times. (Continued infra)

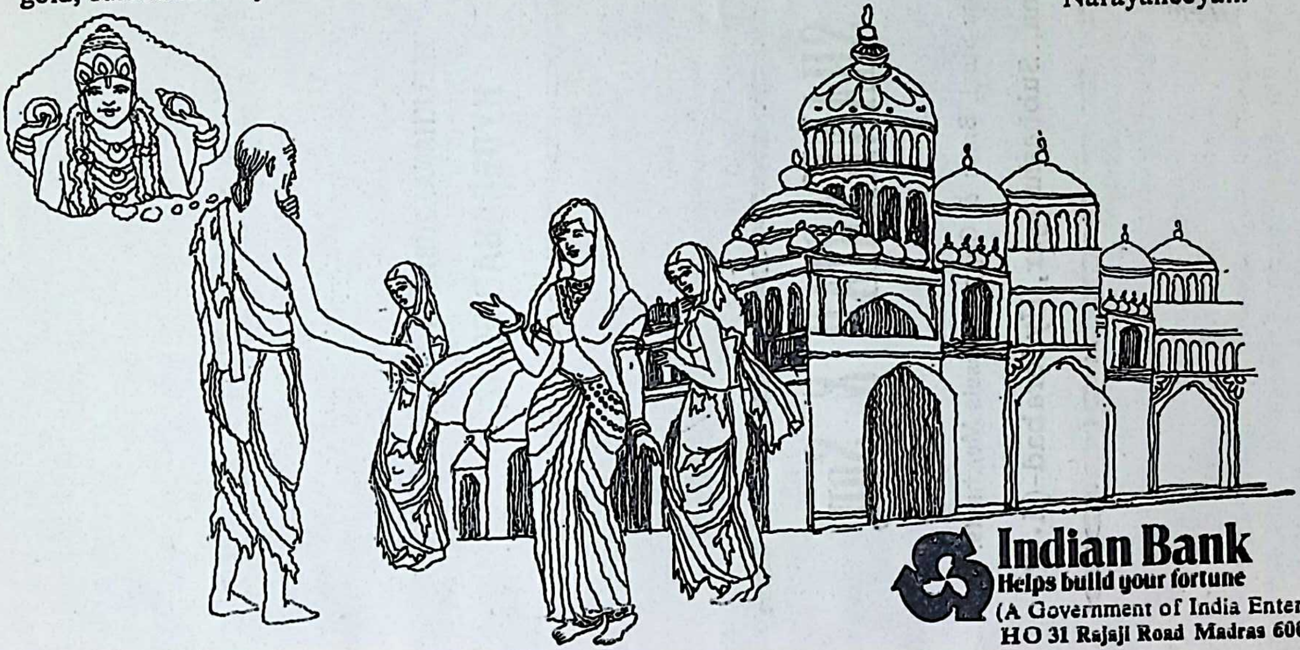
TIPPU

When Tippu Sultan of Mysore carried fire and sword, pillaging and annexing the neighbouring kingdoms in bloody conquests, the authorities at the helm of affairs of the temple were afraid that he would destroy the Guruvayoor Temple in his stride. With a view to avoiding this tragedy they transferred this idol to yet another famous Sri Krishna Temple at Ambalapuzha, in the erstwhile Travancore State. If the Guruvayoor Temple were to be lost in the orgy of death and destruction, let loose by Tippu, it would not have mattered much. But if the idol were to be lost,

सखीपरितां मणिहेम भूषितां
बुबोध च त्वत्करुणां महाद्भुताम्

On his return from Lord Krishna's abode, Kuchela found his wife wearing ornaments of pearls and gold, surrounded by other ladies. He then realised the wonders that His compassion can do.

Narayaneeyam



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the loss would have been irreparable; so thought the temple management. The idol is made of Pathala Anjanam, a very rare precious stone of granite family. The oil with which the idol is anointed is considered to have great medicinal value. (This oil is available from the temple against payment and is called Abhisheka Oil). Thus, for about two years the deity of Guruvayoor. Temple remained as the honoured guest of Ambalapuzha temple. Even today one could see the Sree Kovil and Thidappally specially built at Ambalapuzha for housing the deity. The water in the well that was dug as an infrastructure to that Sree Kovil is so remarkably serene and crystal-clear, even to this day, that it has attained a legendary importance. The idol was brought back to Guruvayoor in 1798. To commemorate this event the Travancore Palace had made substantial endowments to the Guruvayoor Temple.

TIPPU'S NIGHTMARE

When the old Malabar was overrun by Tippu's forces, Tippu had installed his emissaries as the chieftains of conquered places. A contingent of his forces was then camping in the neighbourhood of Guruvayoor. Strange as it may seem, Tippu was said to be labouring at nights under a haunting fear of something like a *Sree Chakra* chasing him in circles and depriving him of his peace and sleep. Some of his hindu officers counselled him that it was symbolic of the wrath of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan. Ironically, Tippu was convinced of this implicit message and he issued orders not to disecrate the temple or do anything that would be a sacrilege. He also issued an order to his occupying forces, not to touch the properties of the temple or do anything disrespectful to its sanctity. He also directed his men to remit the taxes in and around the temple and to divert some collections to the temple, towards the day-to-day expenses of the temple. It is said that these records are still there in the archives of the temple. Even after the vacation of Tippu's occupation of Malabar and its reversion to the British suzerainty, these arrangements continued uninterruptedly. Tippu instituted a fund for the day-to-day expenses of the temple. When the British ste-

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YOGY BEEDI WORKS
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pped into his shoes they endorsed this arrangement and recognised the fund. Subsequently they commuted the fund to tax-free lands and in lieu of offering cash, its equivalent in land was given to the Temple. This land is known as "*Sarva Manyam*" in the revenue records.

A Classic is Born

The scene is laid as far back as August 1586. One fine morning a young man in his prime of youth. afflicted with a stroke of rheumatism and declared as lost by all the well-known physicians of the time was brought to Guruvayoor, in a country stretcher called 'Manjal', from his native village, Kurumbathur, in Ponnani Taluk. All the medicines administered, and the courses of treatment recommended by experts, having been found ineffective, the young man's father, who was himself a great scholar, Mathrudattan Bhattathiri, eventually decided to consign him to the tender care of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan who is the only healer of all ailments. This young man in distress was none other than the great devotee-scholar, Narayana Bhattathiri.

Narayana Bhattathiri had his early lessons in Meemamsa philosophy from his scholarly father, Mathrudattan Bhattathiri. Later, he learned *Logic* or *Tharkasasthra* from Achutha Pisharody of Thrickandiyoor. But of what use was his learning or other accomplishments? His entire physical frame was paralysed. And, all who had seen him, would have cried out the Lord's name 'Narayana' in pity.

In those days there was no choultry or any residential quarters in Guruvayoor. Probably informal and homely accommodation might have been provided by some kindly souls in the vicinity. In all probability Mathrudattan and others must have lifted the young man physically and laid down his inert body in front of the deity. With tears trickling down their cheeks, eyes half-closed in deep reverence, hearts beating fast, in step with the measured beats of the drums inside the temple, they stood in front of the deity; benumbed and frustrated. Finally, they collected

Vaidyaratnam p. S. Varier's

ARYA VAIDYA SALA,

KOTTAKKAL.

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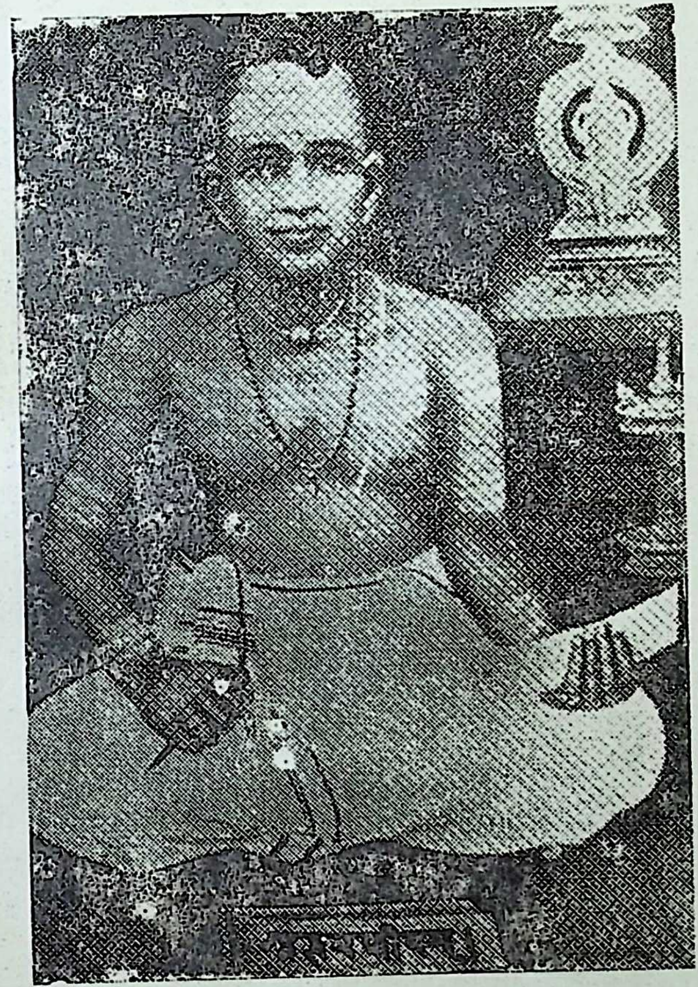
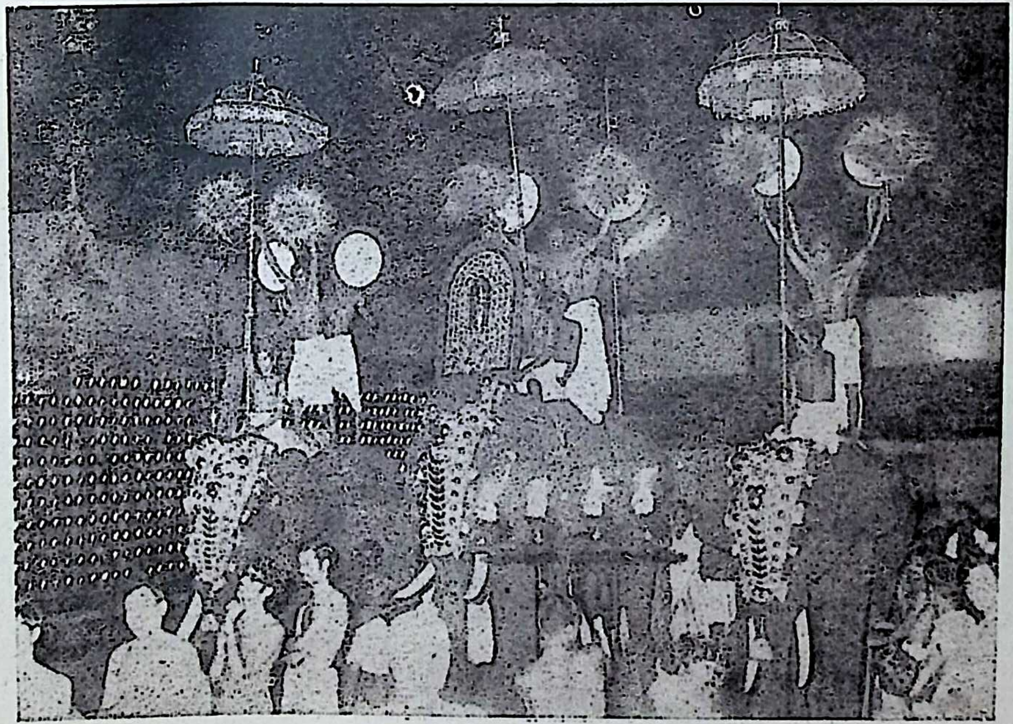


SRIMAN NARAYANA BHATTATHIRI. From a traditional paintin



NIGHT SEEVELI

their thoughts and with mixed feelings of despondancy, hopes and faith in the mercy of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan, they consigned him to His care and patronage and withdrew with faltering steps and heavy hearts, resigning to the inevitable.

The young man, lonely and forlorn, unable to stand erect or move freely, tilted his heavy head towards the Lord, from where he was lying huddled and fixed a longing, lingering look at the lotus feet of the Lord. His eyes became dim with tears and his heart sank beneath his feet in utter despair. As his tongue alone was not locked by the all-clipping rheumatism, strainingly he uttered the word 'Narayana—Narayana'. This Divine name he repeated, unendingly, ending everything he said with the word "Narayana", as a refrain. His voice was low, and feeble, but fervent and appealing, and it was more eloquent and echoing than a thunderous rhetoric. He could do nothing but pray for the mercy of the Lord. And his prayers were long and intense. They came out in a beautiful artistry of refined literature. Day in and day out he prayed, weaving melody from the sacred air, and blending it with the mellowed words, in a sublime confection. With shivering lips, he made the invocations, sweetening the verses that issued forth at his lips with his tears. And this song-celestial enlivened the world and enriched the world-literature. Nothing is more palatable to the Lord than a prayer flavoured with one's own spontaneous tears. This was the monumental work, *Narayaneeyam*. On the hundredth day of his dedication, Bhattathiri regained his health.

What Bhattathri did in his "Narayaneeyam" was in essence to refine and distil Vyasa's *Sree Maha Bhagavatham* in a sweet-sounding, smooth-flowing verse, which directly wings its way to the innermost recesses of the reader's and listener's heart, making them weep or waltz as did the author when he composed it. Narayaneeyam consists of 1036 Slokas. Bhattathri wrote them in the course of 100 days and completed the great classic on November 27, 1586. He was then 27.

The research scholars attribute authorship of 37 great works in Sanskrit to Bhattathiri. Included in the range are Astrology and Meemamsa. He travelled wide in his time, and later became the

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scholar-at-court, of the Ambalapuzha Rajah. It was during his stay at Ambalapuzha that he wrote the great grammatical classic in Sanskrit, PRAKRIYA SARVASWAM. It is rightly said that the world of literature is yet to appreciate Bhattathiri at his true worth and that a proper appreciation of *Narayaneeyam* is a mark of consummate scholarship. It is believed that he lived to the ripe old age of 106, according to some scholars. Bu according to Ulloor and others he lived a full span of 88 years only.

His last days were spent in the temple of Muckolackal in Ponnani Taluk, from where he composed "Sree Pada Sapthati". Believers maintain that he attained direct Heaven from there.

Guruvayoor Temple administration is celebrating the "*Narayaneeyam Day*" every year, with great eclat, pomp and fanfare. It is mutually complimentary that the temple administration has taken it into its head to commemorate the author and the classic, "Narayaneeyam". By so celebrating the memory of the great author, the Guruvayoor Temple administration is only camplimenting itself.

* * *

POONTHANAM

Another great devotee-poet whose name is associated with the Guruvayoor lore is Poonthanam. A most unassuming devotee and a great poet, Poonthanam was born in an obscure village called Angadipuram, of Valluvanad Taluk, in the present Malappuram District. He was not a great Sanskrit Scholar like Bhattathiri. But as a poet few could equal him in his assimilation of the genius of the Malayalam tongue. More than anything else he was a great devotee of Guruvayoorappan, and he used to trek all the way from his distant village to Guruvayoor, negotiating dense and dark forest expanses, for a 'Darshan' of the Lord. Unfortunately the joys of a family life, with children and grand-children playing about, were denied to him.

All his children were still-born. He was sad and sorrowful on that score. Finally, a male-child was born to him. Happy

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and high in spirits he wanted to share the joy with others and on the day of the child's *Annaprasam*, Poonthanam invited his kith and kin for a feast at his Illam, ("Illam" is the name describing the 'HOME' of the Namboodiri). That day the invitees and inmates of the 'Illam' were all gay and cheerful. Poonthanam's dear baby was bathed keeping to the customary rituals, and it was lying whimpering on a mat at one corner of the dimly-lit room. Being a small Illam the paucity of space had to be reconciled with, and one of the guests, perhaps, not seeing the child's presence at the corner, might have tossed her wet clothes carelessly to the corner of the room. Indeed it must have fallen on the child. Others too, after their bath, might have followed suit, flinging the wet linen to the corner. Soon there was a heap of wet clothes on the child, and as a result, the child was asphyxiated. This is the common story. Anyway the festive day thus ended with a tragic note. But Poonthanam was not given to despair. He still consoled himself singing in praise of the Lord. "When my infant Krishna is dancing in my heart why do I want other children of my own", he sang.

It is said that during the composition of one of his works "Santana Gopalam" he was faced with a helpless situation not knowing how to describe the scene of "Vaikundham", the abode of God. His imagination of Vaikundham was lacking in clarity and this made him sad and sullen. That night Sri Guruvayoorappan showed him the scene in a dream and Poonthanam aptly described it in his poem with immense satisfaction.

There is yet another story still current, about the fondness of Guruvayoorappan for Poonthanam, in which both the devotees, Melpathoor and Poonthanam, figure as principal characters. It was a time when Melpathoor was making quick recovery from his stroke, through Guruvayoorappan's grace. Melpathoor, a deep scholar in Sanskrit, was proud of his learning, inspite of his devotion to Guruvayoorappan. Strange are the Lord's ways of purifying the minds of his devotees. None knows how his benefaction may work. Stick and carrot or a little rap on the knuckles, in time, to make his dear ones behave, are all his way of doing things. Poonthanam's simplicity was in sharp contrast to Bhattathiri's arrogance and the former could not make any tall claims to any erudition in any branch of knowledge, All that he had to his credit, on his own admission, was that he could compose a few verses in praise of his Lord in simple Malayalam without any pretentions to scholarship. He had on hand a few verses in simple Malayalam,which he took to Bhattathiri with a request to leaf through, wet and furbish, as it called for. An Einstein can have little respect for any who knew no mathematics; like wise,Bhattathiri had scant regard for Poonthanam whose learning he rated low. So, Bhattathiri dismissed Poonthanam with brevity, even without extending the courtesy of a good word or sympathetically agreeing to go through his composition at his leisure or making any mollifying efforts to keep Poonthanam in good humour, This stung him to the quick. Feeling badly humiliated, and weeping like a child, he started cursing his own gaucherie and impetuosity.

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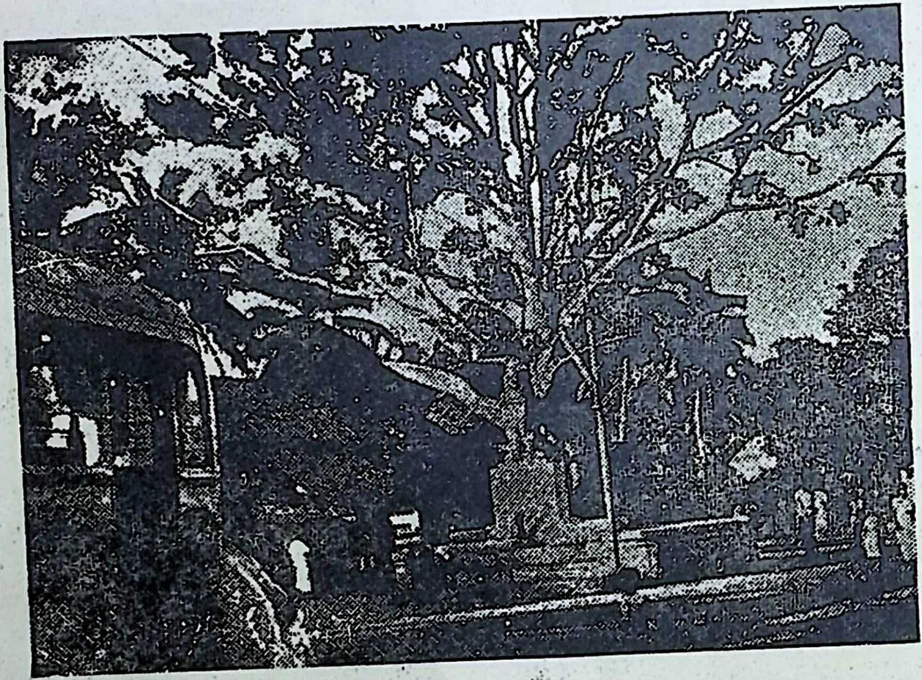
However, Melpathur was not to get away with his pride. That night he had had a relapse. Not knowing what it was due to, he prayed Guruvayoorappan, most fervantly, to have mercy on him and to spare any further trials and tribulations. He could not sleep. And he felt as if he was having a memory black - out. He developed a fear that his claims to scholarship were being eclipsed and that he was being subjected to humiliations as a nonentity. He was told in a dream by some one that he was just pretentious and not at all praise-worthy. He started weeping, lamenting over his sad fate and he called out to the Lord. Then Melpathur had a vision in which the Lord appeared and admonished him, saying that " *Poonthanam's devotion was more endearing to Him than Melpathur's erudition*".

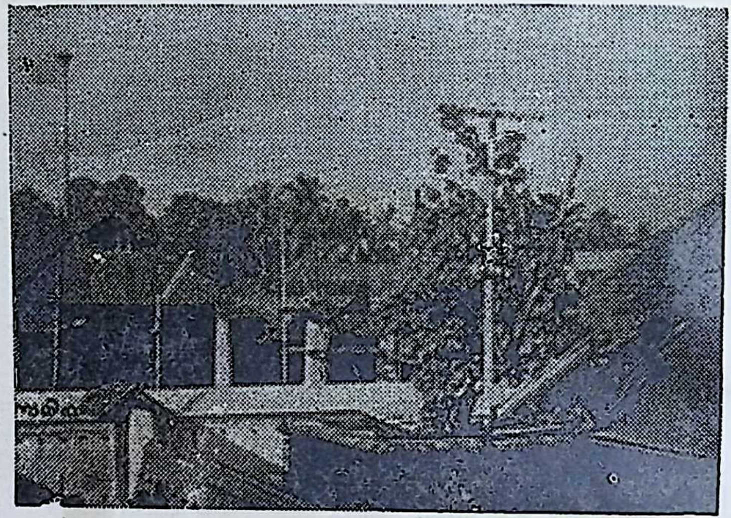
This put things in the proper perspective. Melpathur wanted to assuage the grief of Poonthanam and make amends for wounding his feelings. He rushed out, and approaching Poonthanam prostrated before him, begging for his pardon.

Legends are many that reveal the love and affection Sree Guruvayoorappan had showered on His great devotee, Poonthanam. On one of his long and tedious journeys to Guruvayoor through the forest, he was waylaid by robbers. He was relieved of his meagre belongings and when they were attempting to kill him as their logic demanded, Poonthanam cried for help calling the name of "Guruvayoorappan" and closed his eyes, prepared to meet the extreme eventuality. Alas Guruvayoorappan was within the cry of Poonthanam and there he materialized in the form of equestrian Mangattachan! the well-known Minister of the Zamorin Raja. When Poonthanam opened his eyes; he saw Achan with his drawn - sword smeared with gore and the truncated body of the thugs lying all around in Pieces. Poonthanam knew no words to thank him and unable to contain his gratitude, he forced the only gold ring he had, on Mangattachen as his memento.

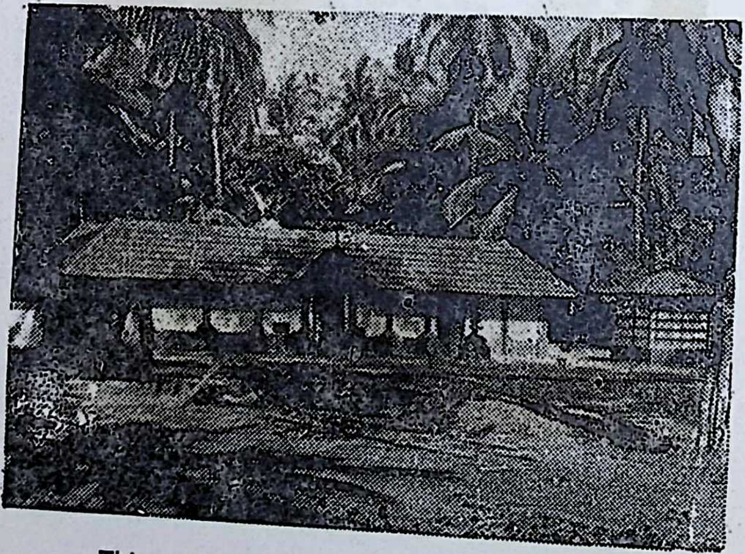
That night the chief Priest of Guruvavoor Temple had a dream in which some one had told him that he would find a goldring on the deity the next morning which was to be handed over



MANJULLAL



Devi temple to the right



Thiruvenkatachalapathy Temple, Guruvayur to Poonthanam who was due there the next day. Events turned out according to schedule. When Poonthanam received back the ring from the Chief Priest his happiness knew no bounds, for, he knew that his saviour was none other than the great saviour of all, Sri Guruvayoorappan himself.

One can write volumes about Poonthanam or of various other legendary devotees of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan to show their devotion to Sri Guruvayoorappan and the Lord's love for them. As all those details are not relevant to the purpose of this guide we confine our efforts to give only vignettes and the thumbnail sketches of persons and events that may help to give a bird's-eye view of the historical, cultural and spiritual landscape of the Temple and the times. There are many others also like Kuroor Amma, Manjula and others, considered to be great devotees of the Lord.

The noted works of Poonthanam are "Sree Krishna Karnamritham", "Jnanappana', and "Santhanagopalam". All are devotional works in praise of Sri Guruvayoorappan.

⁂

A Bird's-eye view of the Temple.

DEEPASTHAMBAM:- Just in front of the temple there is a huge "Deepasthambham" (Tower of Light.) This was an offering made by late Sir C. Sankaran Nair in 1910. It has 13 discs and including the basement, its height is 24 feet. There are four Deepasthambhas, made of brass, inside the temple. The one a the Western Gopuram was a contribution from late Sri. P.R. Nambiar of Guruvayoor. Formerly there was one more inside the temple, at the northern wing, but it was smashed one day by the King-elephant Kesavan in one of his angry moods.

THE GOPURAS;- The two-storyed Gopuras at the Estern and Western entrances house some of the rare frescoes of the 16th

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Century. And those murals there have a theme and style distinct from other schools.

KING-SIZE BELL:- A giant bell of the temple fastened to a tower-like installation of medium height to the south of the eastern gopuram, announces the (HOUR) by its hourly chiming.

ANAPPANTHAL-NADAPPURA:- The roofed expanse inside the temple between the Estern Gopuram and the 'Balickal Pura' is called Nadapura. "Ana Panthal" is the northern portion of Nadapura. *Panthal* is 'pavilion' and the word *Ana* means elephant, and when it is so prefixed it is suggestive of its size. Thus it has acquired the name *Ana Panthal* because of its giant size. In all the temples of Kerala just in front of the main building, there is an Ana Panthal, high-roofed and un-enclosed, facilitating the festival processions and divine durbars when deities of the temples would be taken around, on caparisonel elephants to the accompaniment of temple orchestra.

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The Anappantal-cum-Nadappura of Guruvayoor is the place where *AnnaPrasam*, *Thulabharam* etc. are being conducted. Formely marriages were conducted under the roof of Anappanthal. Later, a marriage Mandapam was especially designed for the purpose, in front of the temple and thereafter the venue of marriage was shifted to the KALYANA MANDAPAM. By this arrangement, the crowding, confusion and congestion inside the temple are very much relieved. (There are days when more than 150 marriages are conducted at the Mandapam and this rich crop of marriages provide brisk business to Hotels and Restaurants. This being the reason why hotel-business is being considered a money-spinner in Guruvayoor).

Anappanthal is a very strange place where you find innumerable pictures, drawings and other such offerings made by the devotees, initiates and novices alike, hung in a most disorderly way. Most of them are cheep and devoid of any artistic and aesthetic value. The confusion that prevails there suggests that a system has to be evolved for the upkeep of Nadappura in a style. Among the many things that are found wanting; a little orderliness in arranging the drawings, pictures and exhibits (eschewing those which are too commonplace and inartistic) should be the first in the order of priorities.

A vat full of Jequirity (known in Malayalam as 'Kunnikkuru') is placed to the right of the base of the golden-flag-mast. Children are found to be fond of playing with those Jequirity. Agitating the contents of the vat with their tender hands, may help smarten the dull children, it is believed.

GOLDEN FLAG-MAST:: Logan who was the collector of old Malabar had recorded the height of the old flag-mast of the Guruvayoor Temple as 110 feet. The first flag-mast was made from the trunk of a herb called *Sida Cordifolia*, known as *Kurunthotti* in Malayalam. One may wonder how a medicinal herb could grow into such a tree of giant dimensions as to provide a trunk of that size. Those who doubt the veracity of this may kindly make a trip to Kidangoor Subramanya Temple. There, one can see in the Koothambalam a pillar of 36" diametre, and 20'

നിങ്ങൾക്ക് വിദേശത്തു താമസിക്കുന്ന
ബന്ധുക്കളോ സുഹൃത്തുക്കളോ
ഉണ്ടോ ?

വിദേശങ്ങളിൽ താമസിക്കുന്ന ഇന്ത്യൻ വംശജരായ പൗരന്മാർക്ക് അവരുടെ മിച്ച വരുമാനം ഇന്ത്യയിൽ അമേരിക്കൻ ഡോളറിലോ, സ്റ്റെർലിങ്ങ്പൗണ്ടിലോ, അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഇന്ത്യൻ ഉറുപ്പികയിൽ തന്നെയോ, നോൺ - റെസിഡൻറ് എക്സ്റ്റേണൽ അക്കൗണ്ടിൽ നിക്ഷേപിക്കാവുന്നതാണ്.

അത്തരം നിക്ഷേപങ്ങൾ ഇന്ത്യൻആദായനികുതിക്കും സ്വത്തുനികുതിക്കും ബാധകമല്ല.

ആകർഷകമായ പലിശനിരക്കുകൾ
ലഭിക്കുന്നു.

കൂടുതൽ വിവരങ്ങൾക്ക് നിങ്ങളുടെ

ഏറ്റവും അടുത്തുള്ള
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ഇന്ത്യൻ
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നിങ്ങളുടെ വളർച്ചക്ക് ഒരു ഉത്തമ സുഹൃത്ത്.

height, with a lavish display of engravings. The pillar is straight and majestic and has defied the ravages of the times.

The (Sida Cordifolia) Kurunthotti timber for the flag-mast was brought from the Nilambur forests. Following an astrological reading that the flag-mast was in bad disrepair, it was replaced by another flag-staff and covered with gold, in 1952. It is 110 feet high.

KOOTHAMBALAM:- Koothambalam is a necessary adjunct of all the major temples in Kerala. Before we deal at length with the Koothambalam of Guruvayoor a few words about the main characteristics of the Kerala style of Temple Architecture may be relevant.

ARCHITECTURE:- Kerala Temples are the Architectural expressions of a spiritual philosophy and the two are inseparable. Kerala style of temple Architecture is obviously different from other schools in the lay-out, composition, construction and the overall theme. It is distinctly singular even in the format. The Chuttambalam (outer precincts inside the four walls) the Nalambalam, Sreekovil (sanctum sanctorum) are the highlights of the Kerala style. Ofcourse as in other cultural influences, Kerala was neither averse to imbibe other influences, nor inclined to reject, in toto, anything that was alien. Thus we find many things which can be termed as a confluence of severel cultures even in the Temple architecture of Kerala.

It is ofcourse laudable that even while so submitting to outside influences, Kerala has taken care not to lose sight of what was mandatorily laid down in "*Silpa Ratna*" and "*Tandra Samucchaya*". Thus we find the Pandya and chola influences in temples like Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple in Trivandrum, with its sky-scraping gopuras and flights of steps etc. which are uncommon among other temples of Kerala,

Fergusson, an authority on Indian and Eastern architecture is of the view that Nepalese and Tibetan influences could also be seen in the style of construction of many of our temples. But

കൽപകനിധി

പണത്തിനോടുള്ള മനുഷ്യന്റെ അമിതമായ ആഗ്രഹം പലപ്പോഴും കുടുംബബന്ധങ്ങളുടെ ശിഥിലീകരണത്തിനു് കാരണമാകാറുണ്ടു്. എന്നാൽ പണത്തെ ബോധപൂർവ്വം നിക്ഷേപിച്ചു വർദ്ധിപ്പിക്കുകയെന്നതാണു് ശരിയായ മാർഗ്ഗം. ഈ ഉദ്ദേശ്യ സാധ്യത്തിനായി സൌത്തു് ഇന്ത്യൻ ബാങ്കു് ഏർപ്പെടുത്തിയ പദ്ധതിയാണു് **കൽപകനിധി**.

ഈ പദ്ധതിപ്രകാരം വിവിധ കാലയളവുകളിലായി തിരികെ ലഭിക്കുന്ന സംഖ്യകളുടെ സംക്ഷിപ്തരൂപം താഴെ കൊടുക്കുന്നു.

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ദി സൗത്ത് ഇന്ത്യൻബാങ്ക് ലിമിററഡ്
രജി. ആഫീസ്: തൃശൂർ.
(ഒരു വിദേശനാണ്യവിനിമയ ബാങ്ക്)

whatever be those influences, the Kerala Temples have always retained their essential characteristics and individuality, amidst a rat race for cheep imitation.

In the cases of churches and mosques of Kerala they had ofcourse not only to submit to the foreign influences but fully copy them, just because those faiths themselves were foreign. The ancient churches of Kerala were all of Ionian School, while he mosques were pleasingly Persian.

The Koothambalams of Kerala temple have a pre-eminance n the scheme of things and some of them have made significant contributions to the cultural history of Kerala. They were the nursery beds, nerve-centres and launching pads of all the temple-rts: They were the Natya-Graha (house of dance, drama and discourses). The word Koothambalam means the shrine of Koothu.

KOODIYATTAM & KOOTHU.

Koodiyattam is an aristocratic and majestically masculine temple rt (exclusively practised and perfected in Kerala) owing allegiance o Bharatha's *Natya Sastra*. It is, in essence, classical in charact-r. It may be remembered that Kathakali is hybrid and has drawn heavily from Koodiyattam, as also from the folk-rts like "Theeyattu" and "Theyyam". It is said that Koodiyatt-m has a history of 2000 years. And Koothu is an Art-form which has stemmed from Koodiyattam in course of time. The common form of Koothu is called *Prabhanda Koothu*. It is dialectical and articulatory in nature,

In Prubhandha Koothu, serious works of eminent scholars ke Narayana Bhattathiri and others are taken as principal sub-ects and confectioned with a mixture of comments on subjects of opical and local importance and presented most satirically, hu-mourously and often cryptically. In this the Chakyar gives the discourse while Nambiar plays on the "Mizhavu" (a temple ins-rument).

Koothambalam is the stage or the theatre for presenting the Koothu. Koothambalams will be invariably located in the front and to the right of the presiding deity. So is the Koothambalam of Guruvayoor temple. It is at the south-eastern corner of the temple. The noted Koothambalams of Kerala are 1) Trichur 2) Irinjalakuda, 3) Kidangoor, 4) Thrippunithura, 5) Haripad 6) Guruvayoor.

The pillars and ceilings of Koothambalams are often profusely engraved, painted and lavishly embellished with ornamental filigrees and fittings. Only half of the area of Koothambalams will be thrown open to the audience; the other half being reserved as stage and green-rooms for the artists themselves.

The most interesting aspect of the functional side of this Art is that it is practised and performed by only one community ie. The Chakyars of Kerala. The right to perform "Koothu" is an exclusive prerogative of the members of certain families attached to certain temples. It is strange that at a time when even the right of Brahmin community, to perform the *Poojas* in the temples, is being challanged, the right of Chakyar communiiy to perform Koothu, should remain unassailed and insulated against such trends. However the present strength of this community does not exceed even a hundred. Therefore, unless some form of democratization is countenenced in this art on an urgent basis, Koothu as an Art would become evanescent.

A Bird's-Eye View of the Indoor Setting.

UPADEVAS

Sastha.

In the southern wing of the temple yard, is the small shrine for Sastha, facing west. The idol is made of dark granite and is about a metre in height. There is a huge granite stone in front of the shrine, placed in an inclined position for breaking coconuts, considered very dear to Sastha. The authorities have a programme on their anvil to give a face-lifting to the shrine by gold-plating the roof.

Except that of Sastha there is no other shrine outside the Nalambalam (outer precincts inside the compound) if the enclosure for VANA DURGA at the North-Eastern corner can be considered a separate compound.

When one proceeds to the west after worshipping SASTHA one finds 2 two-storied apartments as the two angles of a triangle, forming part of the western and southern walls of the temple.

MELSANTI (Chief-priest) The extreme western end of the apartment of the southern wing is the residential quarters of the chief priest. Once a Namboodiri Brahmin, well-versed in vedas mantras and tantric rites, is appointed as a chief priest, he is not expected to stir out of the temple compound until his tenure of office is over. And he has to live an austere life of celibacy and dedication during his tenure. Since the rigours of this life are so exacting, a chief-priest's tenure, at a time is limited to six months' duration only. However, he is eligible for reappointment after a break. The villages of Sukapuram and Perumanam were in the days of old,noted centres of Sanskrit-learning and the Melsanthis were drawn invariably from those centres. At present Melsanthis are drawn by lots from among eligible applicants.

In the western wing of the two-storied apartment is housed the store of the temple where the temple utensils are kept and it is called *Kalavara*.

Othikkans:- Next in the cadre comes Othikkans. They also perform certain poojas, by way of relieving the strain on Melsanthi (like pantheerati)·

Keezh Santhis;- They, as a rule, assist the Melsanthi and arrange materials for the pooja. They attend to several chores like drawing water etc. However they are not expected to even touch the Moolavigraha or perform any poojah

OOTTU-PURA (Dining Hall)

In the northern wing of the yard, is the two-storied building called *Oottupura*. The western end of the oottupura has been used as the green room for Krishnattam.

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The upper and lower storeys of oottupura are now more frequently used for *Namajapa* and *Bhagavatha recitals*.

DURGA SHRINE

A passing reference about the Durga Shrine, situated to the east of the oottupura has already been made. The popular belief is that the presiding Deity is VANADURGA and in keeping with that belief no roof is provided for the *SREEKOIL.* The belief is that for the Vanadurga, the sky should be the roof. This DEVI is known as the *Edathu Purathu Bhagavathi*. This temple is said to be older than the main temple of Lord Krishna.

Offerings to Vana Durga

Azhal is the important offering (the current rate for this item of offering is Rs.2/—). Then there is Lalitha Sahasranama Archana (the charge is Rs.8/—). The lighting of the Chuttuvilacku (illumination) (Rs.250/—)

FESTIVALS.

The Most important festival is the Navarathri festival and it lasts for 9 days. *Thrikala Poojas*, recital of Lalitha Sahasranama, illuminations and floral decorations are the high-lights of this festival.

THALAPPOLI.

Another festival celebrated with great eclat and much fanfare is the *Thalappoli festival*- It is a one-day affair conducted by the public. *Kalamezhuthu*-an artistic depiction of the form and features of the Devi in loud colours on the floor, the devotional songs, processions etc. are the major attractions of the festival. This event usually falls in the first week of January.

NADAPPURAS:

In the northern wing of the Nadappura a Portion of the roof is left open. It is believed that once Adi Sankara, while making, one of his astral journeys was forced to hurtle down through this opening into the temple as he was tempted to by-pass a seeveli procession, regardless of it. It was on an *Ekadasi Day*. Sri Sankara remained for a period of 41 days in the temple and formulated the entire system of poojas, the rituals and the litany.

Massive Nadappuras are now being built on Northern, Southern and Wertern yards, with images of the mythological and puranic characters, and those of the Saints and savants of Guruvayoor moulded as reliefs,in concrete mouldings of finest craftsmanship. The skilful and dexterous hand of Artist Krishnan has imparted a rare life to those moulded reliefs.

NALAMBALAM.

Let us now enter the sacred *Nalambalam*. When we enter *Nalambalam* through the front, we find a narrow pathway flanked by raised platforms. The northern wing is called the *North Vathilmadam* and the Southern wing, the *South Vathilmadam*. Devotees could be seen standing squeezed on *Vathilmadoms* to have a Darshan of the Lord from that vantage position. *North Vathilmadom* is otherwise known as *Arattukettipadi*. It is said that during the days of the composition of *Narayaneeyam* Bhattathiri had been using this as his lounge and for his siesta. Bhattathiri had an attendant during his stay here and he was none other than his own brother, whose duty it was to reduce to writing what Bhattathiri had been composing.

There is another entrance to *Nalambalum*, through the door at the northern wing. To the east of that is the *Nirtha Pura* (the dance-chamber). That was the prayer room of *Vilwamangalam*. It is said that in the ecstasies of devotional delight, Vilwamangalam used to sing and dance rapturously from there and that he had Darshan of the Lord from that sacred chamber.

SACRED WELL:

There is a deep well to the south of this *Nrithappura*. Nowhere in Guruvayoor or in its neighbourhood is there such a clear, cool water. The water in the well maintains its level in all seasons.

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A few years ago a devotee from Tamil Nadu happened to fall into this well and be drowned. Since then, the well has been properly covered to avoid such mishaps in future.

THIDAPPALLI:

Nivedyas are prepared in the *Thidappalli* and this is situated at the south eastern corner, inside the *Nalambalam*.

SARASWATHI ARA:

To the west of *Thidappally* and the *Vigneswar's* shrine there is a chamber called "SARASWATHI ARA". During Navarathri festival, this chamber acquires special significance and special poojas are conducted here in connection with the ritual called "POOJA VAIPU"

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There is a "Dark Chamber" close to the "Saraswathi Ara" adjoining THIDAPPALLI. This chamber is otherwise known as 'SECRET CHAMBER". This chamber remains shrouded in mystery. It is widely believed that it contains rare precious stones of fabulous value including the mythological "SYAMANTHAKA" ·The opening to this chamber remains closed with a huge granite stone. Legends say that the treasures inside this chamber are closely guarded by innumerable serpents. One thing is certain, No one has dared to open this chamber since it was so closed, way back; none knows when.

For a short spell of time at the turn of the century the temple administration fell into the hands of the court of wards of Madras High Court. And it is said that in 1914 an attempt was made to open this chamber by the court of wards. But certain inauspicious events portended ominous consequences and soon the attempts were abandoned.

Incidentally, some believe, that this was the place from where Vilwamangalam attained SAMADHI. Some others are of the view that during the dark days of Tippu's invasion, the authorities, apprehending large scale destruction, had sacreted all the valuables-jewels, gold etc. inside the chamber as a prelude to their transferring the deity to Ambalapuzha. Records are at variance on such subjects and some writers even say that the Moolavigraha was not taken to Ambalapuzha but only the "*Thidambu*" representing the deity, This view may not be correct. If as a matter of fact the original deity was so concealed, the proper place for it would have been this dark chamber itself and in which case this would have been the first to be reopened by all means when the holocaust was over.

There is paucity of space inside the NALAMBALAM, The entire floor area is paved with granite slabs. Inside the *Nalambalam* we find a medium-size ANANTHASAYANAM sculpted in granite and fixed on to the western wall of tne Nalambalam facing the rear of the Sreekovil (Sactum sanc torum). This is a later addition to the setting, made at the time of the recent renovation. Before that, there was only a picture of Ananthasayauam. Prior to that, there was a door opening to the outer yard. There is a story relating to the permanent closure of this doorway.

In the days of old, only the Moosaths (Brahmin community) were privileged to mount the elephants on occasions of Seeveli (Divine Durbar). One day, one Moosath, whose turn it was that day to mount the elephant, did not turn up on time and when questioned by the authorities he is said to have mouthed an impudent and pompously impertinent reply. Acting on the spur and grievously provoked, the authorities had him pushed out through that door and slammed the door shut behind him. That Moosath was never seen since then and the door also. remained closed. When

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the temple was renovated after the fire that entrance was done away with, and swopped with the *Anathasayanum* as we find it today.

Since that incident, it was decreed by the authorities that Keezhsanthi (subordinate priests) may do well to mount the elephant during Seevelees.

MANDAPAM.

The Mandapam, situated right in the centre of the *Nalambalam* and just in front of the *Sree Kovil*, has a unique history of its own. It was sitting on this Mandapam, face to face with Guruvayoorappan, that Bhattathiri composed the *Narayaneeyam*. Formerly Brahmins were allowed to get on to the Mandapam for having Darshan of the deity at close quarters, but now entry is denied to all.

The Mandapam is 9' square. The present Mandapam is over 300 years old. The roof, supported only by 4 granite pillars, attests to the precision and perfection of Kerala's Architectural discipline.

The Mandapam also is being gold-plated as the second phase in the larger programme of gold-plating of the "Sreekovil"

Now that the gold-plating programme of the Sreekovil is over, the Devaswam has taken up the job of 'gold-plating the Mandapam, as an inmmediate programme.

The Gold-covering-programme of Mandapam, has necessitated 100 Kilograms of Copper and 25 Kilograms of Gold. (By the time this book comes out of the press the process of gold-plating of the *Sreekovil* and the *Mondapam* will have been completed).

SREEKOVIL. (Sanctum Sanctorum)

The construction is square-like, not an exact square, but more like a rectangle. There is a repletion of murals as intricate as block-printing on all the three sides, all depicting sequences from *Puranic-tales*, and *Krishna Leela*. Strangely the accent is on the amorous and the erotic. There is one that depicts Lord Siva, smitten by the arrow of cupid, chasing the *Vishnu Maya*, stark naked, in an all-consuming sex-urge; another, a repentant Indra with a rash of genitals all over, as a sequal to the Sage Goutama's curse, because of Indra's lecherous and trecherous adultery with Ahalya; and a fatigued Krishna, relaxing on the lap of Radha after making love to her. Some reliefs on the upper "ring" verge on the obscene, reminding one of the Konarak. They may form befitting complement to the inflaming sexual representations on the inner walls of the palace of Goddess *Venus*.

An attempt to offer a rational explanation for the theme of sex in that highly charged spiritual atmosphere may be elusive and quite baffling. Also we find Jayadeva's "*Geetha Govinda*" with its subtlety, sublimity and sweep of sex and romance, sung six times a day to the accompaniment of Idacka... a seductively soft drum, common in Kerala Temples. Probably as the bright dawn prepares itself in the midnight darkness or as the zero is the womb of all numbers, so it might be argued that one may get satiated with the sensuous before reaching the high road to the spiritual; or the message might be that the right-minded should see the CORE without getting lost in the fleeting sensations all around. When inside, no one is conscious of what is there on the walls outside, all-consciousness being attuned to what is inside the Sree Kovil. And this exactly is the discipline the temples are expected to give.

Regarding the loves painted or carved in the Hindu Temples much-too much has been made, particularly by the exponents of other faiths, In one way it disciplines the mind to give precedence to Bhakti over other emotions. This is what exactly a temple is designed for: prayer and worship and the deliberate assertion that religion is a fulfilment, a flowering of the daily life and aspirations of man. These paintings or carvings are neither so outstanding nor obtrusive, they are as much or as little a part of the entire range of depictions as are the scenes of life. Here indeed is a dynamic faith-Hinduism, as exuberant and lavish and kaleidoscopic as life itself. And it is far more relevant to the common man than the so-called puritanic and ascetic shrines of other faiths. Indeed that is the real strength of Hinduism.

Whatever be the explanation, the theme of the drawings and other representations inside the temple and the predsiposition or predilection to the romantic classic GEETHA GOVINDA once again proclaim that in the gamut of life the full range of the ebb and flow of human emotions have their proper place and may help in the progression and evolution of life. If a Narayana Bhattathiri who was given to a lascivious life can become highly evolved and spiritually seasoned in so short a span, it only goes to prove the eternal truth ingrained in the message of the Geetha- "SARVADHARMAN PARITHYAJYA MAMEKAM SARANAM VRAJA".

The Sree Kovil, designed in 2 layers has a roof of copper sheets. Now, the roof is gold-plated, at great cost.

It is an irrefutable fact that it breathes an air of *romantic, benediction*, in its lighter vein. It is the keynote of *Krishna cult* that it romanticises life in all its facets.

The "Chaitanya" inside the Sree Kovil is so powerful and all-embracing that not only one gets the feeling of an instant ingratiation with it but the more one has the "*Darshan*", the more is the thirst to have more and more of it. A devotee becomes more hungry when he gets most satisfied. This is the feeling of all who visit Guruvayoor for *Darshan*.

The deity is in the traditionally orthodox form of Maha-Vishnu, with all the complements: four arms, Conch, Chakra, Club and Lotus. In the mornings the deity is dressed up like Balakrishna...in his loins. At times some Melsanthis with an artistic disposition tastefully dress up the deity with sandal and silk in various evocative forms.

The temple is so designed that inspite of the flag-staff and all other accoutrements one can get a clear view of the Deity even from the Manjulal, a distance of half a Kilometre.

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RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS.

The important religious festivals celebrated in this temple are 1) Astami Rohini in Chingom (August-September), 2) Sukla Paksha Ekadasi in Vrischigom (November-December), 3) Kuchela day in Dhanu (December-January), the day on which Kuchela visited Sree Krishna with beaten rice, 4) Dwaja Prathishta day commemoration of the (erection of flagstaff in the temple)Makayiram asterism in Makaram (January-February), 5) Vishukani in Medom (April-May) and 6) the 10-day utsavam commencing from Pooyam asterism in Kumbhom (February-March). Of these *Ekadasi* draws the largest crowd. Ekadasi is held as an important day, for according to the Hindu mythology it was on his day that Sree Krishna made Geethopadesa to Arjuna. It was again on this day that Lord asked Sree Sankara to formulate a system of rituals and ceremonies in the temple. Also, Melpathur Bhattathiri had the vision of the Lord on this day. Even before the temple Entry Proclamation, the doors of this temple were open to Harijans on Ekadasi day.

EKADASI:-

Ekadasi is the most important day of the Mandalam period (Mid. Nov-Dec. end.) The temple gets braided up for it about 18 days prior to Ekadasi, with what is called *Vilacku*...illuminations on all nights...and processions (Divine Durbars) and other customary rituals .

There are eleven rows of tiny lamps, and in all 700 numbers, all around the Chuttambalam. It is a veritable sight to see all these lamps plus the Deepasthambhas (tower of lights) lighted and the Divine Durbar going around the temple (seeveli) to the accompaniment of *Pancha Vadyas*. Each day's VILACKU is an offering and it is to the account of a particular person or a family, as a matter of custom.

Among the modern attractions that highlight the Ekadasi festival the foremost is *Chembai Sangeetha Mela*. Of late it has acquired a new dimension, magnificence and grandeur and it is

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graduating fast to take its rightful place on a par with Thyagaraja Utsavam at Thiruvaiyaru. It has a unique history. Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavather who was on the commanding heights of Carnatic Music was noted for his mellowed, sweet voice among the trio: Chembai, Chembankudi and Aryakudi- the great doyens of Carnatic Music.

From the age of 20, Chembai,used to sing on Ekadasi day at Guruvayoor Temple by way of an offering. He continued this practice without break. However in 1952 he ran into trouble, while he was performing at Chidambaram, in Tamil Nadu. When he was reaching the climax of the ascending crescendo in a Raga-recital, his vocal chord snapped and he couldn't continue.

For about 2 years he was rendered unfit for concerts. In 1954 he came to Guruvayoor for Darshan. There, on the Ekadasi day, before Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan, he poured his heart as Bhattathiri did way back, and his prayers were answered. A non-discript Namboodiri whom he chanced to meet there, administered some medicine and soon he was on the road to recovery. He regained his voice in 1954.

Since then every year he used to conduct an Udayasthamana Pooja and put on boards for the Ekadasi, a grand music concert. After his death on 16-10-74 the authorities of the Devaswam and the music lovers and desciples of Chembai made a collective effort to commemorate Chembai's name and talents as part of Ekadasi festival and they organised a 4-day festival, styled as "Chembai Sangeetha Utsavam of Guruvayoor".

This has clicked. It draws the well known,the little known and the unknown exponents of Carnatic music; aspirants to recognition in the art, art-lovers and admirers to this platform. It has become an event of great magnitude.

In the 1979 festival in all 396 artists (vocalists and instrumentalists) participated.

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MANDALAM. It starts from the first Vrischikam (mid. Nov-December) and lasts for 41 days. This is the time when people usually observe austerity and celibacy for their pilgrimage to *Sabarimala*. It is quite common that all "Ayyappas" include Guruvayoor also in their itinerary. Thus the Mandalam season will be usually crowded. A special feature of Mandalam festival is *Abhishekam* with *Panchagavya*.

VAISAKHA.

It is the lunar month commencing from the new moon of Meesha (April-May) to the next new moon.

AKSHAYA TRITIYA.

It is the most important day of Vaisakha. It is the birthday of Balarama.

VISHU. (April-May)

Vishu is supposed to be the new year day of Malayalees. Hence the devotees would like to start the New year with the mascot of seeing Lord Sree Guruvayoorappan as *'the first'* their eyes could behold on Vishu Day. Hence devotees are seen sleeping in the temple yard the previous night to enable them to have the Darshan of the Lord, in the small hours of the morning.

UTSAVA.

Utsava is a ten-day festival- The flag is hoisted on Pushya day in Kumbha (February-March). Emphasis for this Utsava is more on the rituals than on the pomp and pageantry. Also the audio-visual entertainments are given only secondary importance.

ELEPHANT RACE.

As stated above the festival starts with an elephant race. This commemorates an event which has acquired a legendary halo. This happened in those far-off days when Guruvayoorappan had no elephant of His own. The practice then was to inform

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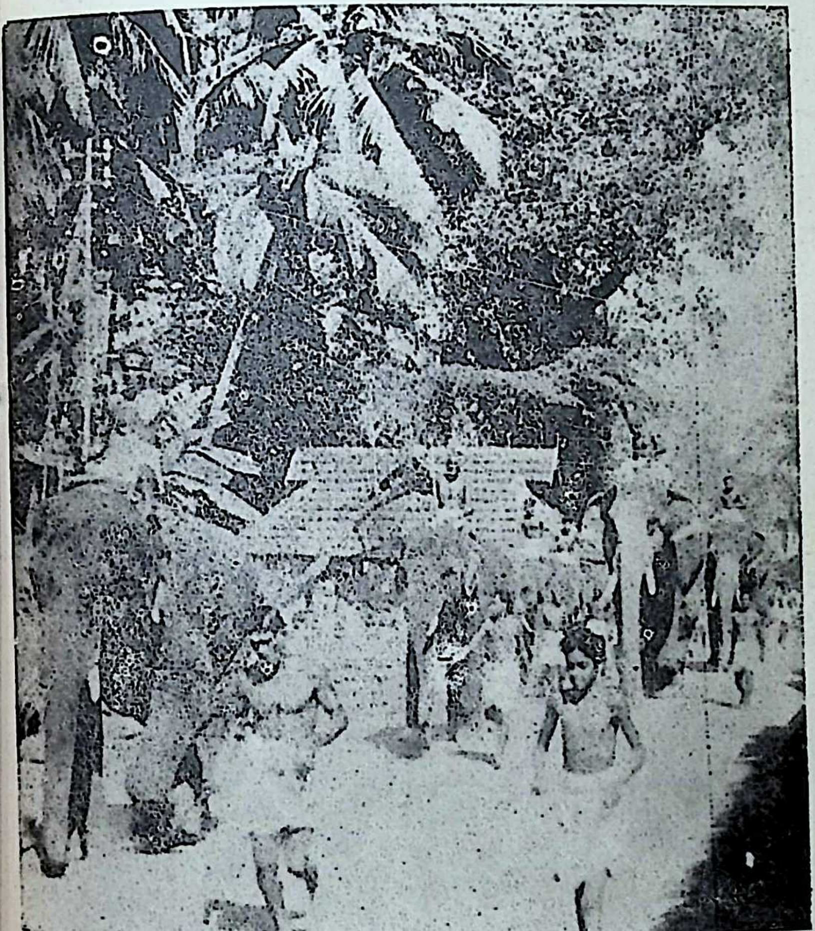
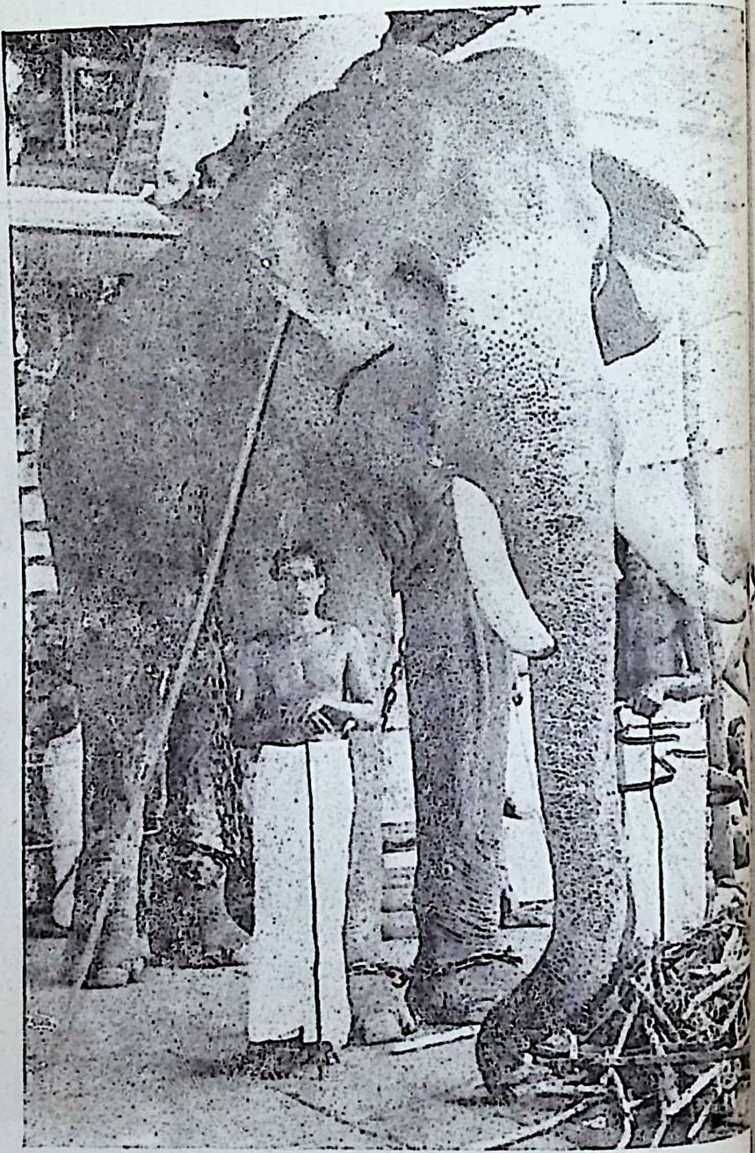


ELEPHANT RACE— Prelude to Utsavam.



So tall and majestic, Elephant Kesavan of Guruvayoor Temp
a King among elephants, whose exploits and sagacity have acc
for a lore of legands that have been woven round his name durin
after his life-time. Devotees of GURUVAYOORAPPAN had mo
his death and his name is commemorated even today with senti
attachment.His mortal remains,the Two tusks, aborn the eastern e
to Nalambalam

the Cochin Raja and it was upto him to send an elephant for the needs of the Utsavam. Those were the days when the Zamoin of Calicut and Raja of Cochin were at logger heads, quite often.A love-hate relationship alternated their mutual dealings and their bickerings were the subject matter of many stories.Thus, on one occasion, when the *Utsavam* was to take place the Zamorin, formally reminded the Cochin Raja of the customary arrangement. As it was a time when the Raja of Cochin had lost no love for the Zamorin, he turned a deaf-ear to the request. Further, all his elephants were then away at Mathilakam for a festival there.

It so happened that on that Utsavam day all the elephants at Mathilakam, came running frantically to Guruvayoor on their own. And thus the Utsavam went on with an unprecedented gusto. The elephant race is being conducted even today to commemorate that event.

Guruvayoor is not the only temple conducting an Elephant race. There is a temple in *Thiruvarppu*, in Kottayam District. There also, an Elephant Race, (the commemorative event is of a different nature) is conducted annually.

On the tenth day of the festival is the ARATTU, the ceremony of immersing the Thidambu (the replica of the deity) taken out in procession) in the holy waters of the temple tank situated to the north of, and close to the *Vanadurga's Shrine*.

All the devotees also will have a holy immersion at the time of the "*Arattu*" as it is considered very auspicious. There is a melee by the milling crowd and utter anarchy and confusion overtake the show when it climaxes with the holy immersion. (Unfortunately the 1975 *Arattu* had taken a toll of 7 lives by way of electrocution in that fervour and confusion, ending the Utsavam with a sad note). The ninth day is the "Pallivetta" (hunting expedition of the Lord).

The temple tank is very huge and deep. And it is quite risky for those who cannot swim to bathe in this tank, without

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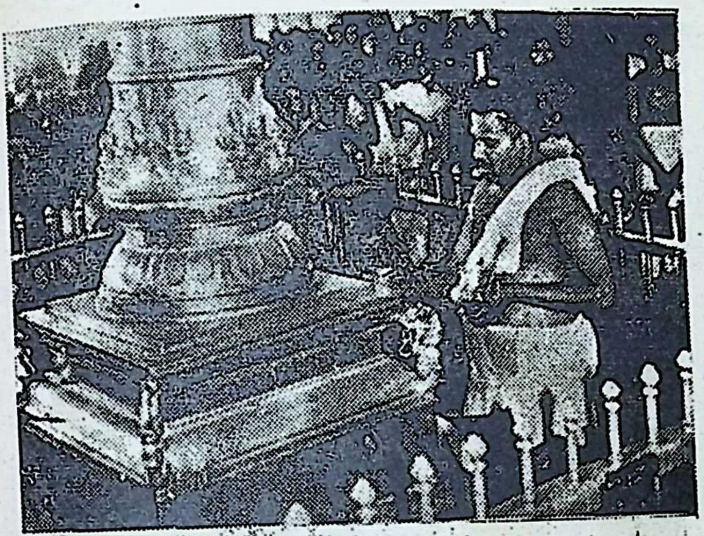
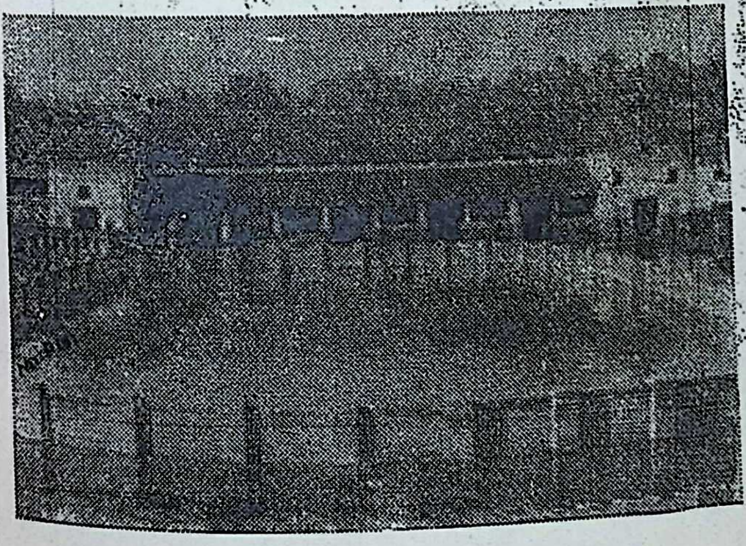


Tantri Sri Chennas Parameswaran Namboodiri Performing Dwajasthambha Pooja

In all matter, relating to the rituals and Poojas the Tantri's word is the last.



TEMPLE TANK

The great firedant caution. The tank has taken a heavy toll since the time of recorded history. Of course, extensive arrangements are being made by the Devaswam to avoid such mishaps. Yet it behoves a pilgrim that he is forewarned against the risks involved in bathing in the tank, without due regard to the safety gadgets and other contrivances, that are presently installed in the tank.

മററെങ്ങും കിട്ടാത്ത മാനസോല്ലാസത്തിന്ന്

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Offerings & Rates

In the matter of making offering to the Lord it is the right spirit and not the quantum, or the cost of the thing offered that counts. Puranic stories drive home this eternal truth. Also the personal experiences of the right-minded are replete with instances that bring home this fundamental truth. The message of *"Krishna Thulabharam"* is to the point; a Thulasi leaf is weightier and worthier to the Lord than gold and jewels, if offered with real Bhakti.

It is a matter of individual taste, belief and above all one's specific prayer that should determine the nature and the quantum of the offering.

The costliest offering on the schedule is *Udayasthaman Pooja* the poojas of dawn-dusk. (It consists of 21 special poojas) The rites relating toUdayasthamana Pooja start from the previous night with what is called *"Athazham,"* which includes a Small feast. There is feeding of Brahmins in the following morning also on a controlled scale. In all, it costs around Rs. 5,000/-

Then, there are the usual items, *Payasams* (a sweet confection in which jaggery or sugar is the vital ingredient.) There are different kinds of payasams. These and other items are listed infra with their respective rates.

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As the nature and specifications of the offerings are usually known to every devotee no descriptive details are called for. But a skeletal sketch of some of the items and their timings may be of interest.

ANNAPRASAM (The first Rice-feeding ceremony of the Child)

Thousands of Parents bring their infants for this ceremony. And it is a pleasing sight to see the infants sitting huddled on the laps of their parents in a long row to take the first morsel of rice in the presence of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan who is the giver and sustainer of all.

The current rate is Rs. 2. This is conducted at Nadappura whenever the temple is open.

MARRIAGES

Marriages are said to be made in Heaven. And if they are to be conducted in the presence of Sri Guruvayoorappan who was himself a romantic Hero, playing the ideal lover to over sixteen thousand odd gopies, it would be doubly blessed.

In the marriage seasons, marriages conducted at the Kalyana Mandapam are without number. And the crowd and the bustle created even spill out to the streets. Even the hotels which otherwise welcome the season, find it a tough job to cater to all and quite often they turn down many orders.

MARRIAGES IN ORTHODOX STYLE

Right in front of the temple, there is the Rukmini Kalyana Mandapam ideally suited to those, particularly the Brahmin community, who wish to conduct the marriages in the orthodox vedic style. What such parties usually do is to have all the prescribed rituals at such places and to confine the garlanding part alone to Guruvayoor Kalyana Mandapam. Another lodging house, KRISHNA BHAVAN, at Manjira Road, West Nada, also provide excellent facilities for conducting marriages in the orthodox style. (Address:- RUKMANI KALYANA MANDAPAM,

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Sri O. K. R. Menon, KRISHNA BHAVAN, Guruvayoor,
(Phone: [241 Gvr], [221 Chwt]

There are no records in the temple to show the names and addresses of the couples getting married at the Mandapam. The temple gives a blanket ticket, to 'whosoever' may ask for it,on payment of Rs. 30/-. There is no reservation system at the Kalyana Mandapam, nor do the authorities concern themselves with the timings. "First come first served" is the principle seemingly applied. This accounts partly for the height of confusion seen at the Mandapam on certain days. Of course the authorities have to bestow some thoughts on the subject and evolve a pattern for making the marriages conducted there, more orderly, systematic and less cumbersome.

ALROOPAMS

These are the miniature...replicas of 'part' or 'whole' of human body or of any divine form offered to the deity by one in fulfilment of a Prayer or a Wish. For instance, if a devotee feels an ailment in the eye or in the limbs then he or she may pray that an Alroopam of the eye or limb may be placed before Guruvayoorappan and it is believed that this may bring relief.

These alroopams are available with the sentries standing on duty in front of the Sreekovil. It is their duty to give the devotee the item which a devotee wants, without payment. Ofcourse the devotee may deposit an amount he/she has in mind in the Hundi.

Sale of Alroopam is a line in which clandestine business is going on outside the temple as street-vendors of Alroopams are exploiting the innocence of devotees by selling Alroopams to them at fancy prices.Hence devotees are warned against this deception. Like wise, the sandal paste and other things offered for sale at shops outside the temple are spurious.

THULABHARAM

This is an offering prevalent in all Kerala Temples by which one offers the Lord one's weight in kind for a prayer answered or a boon received.

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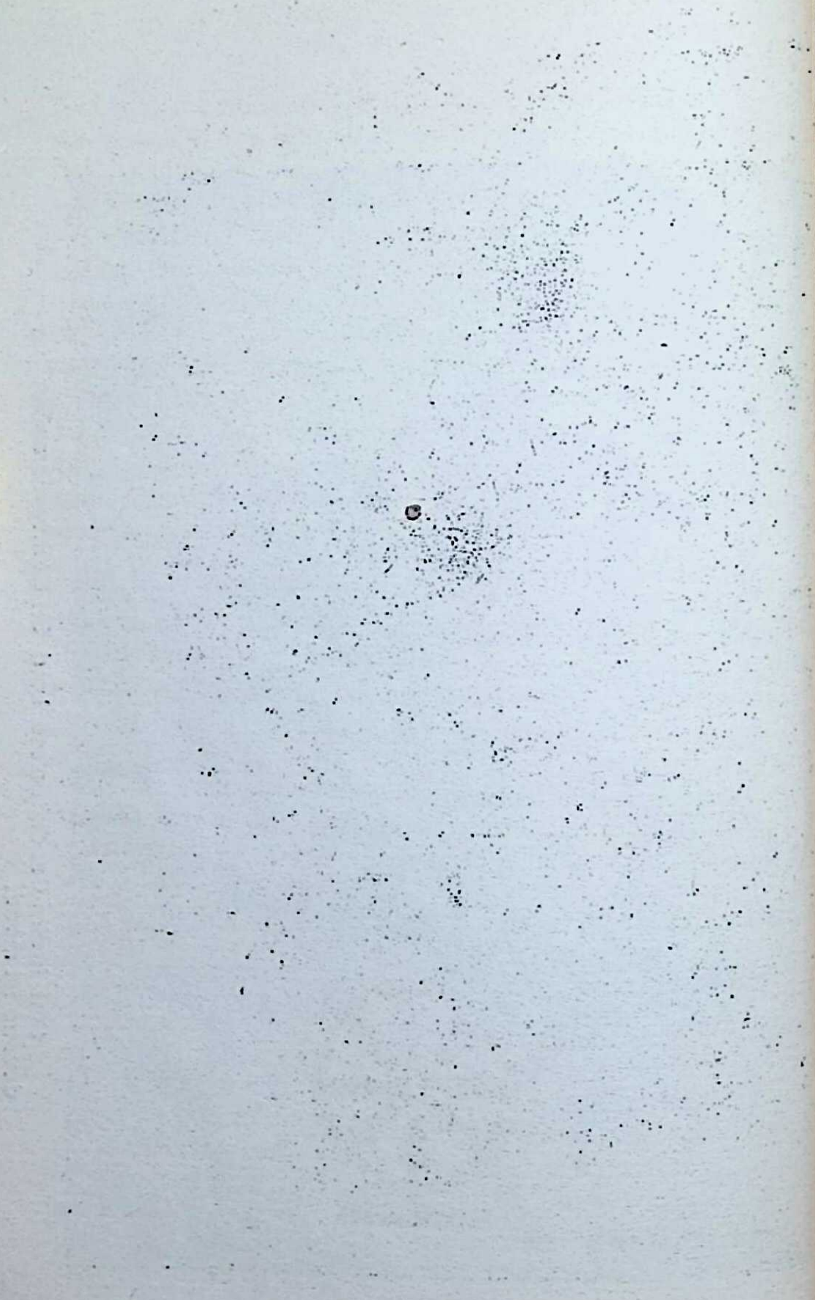
Sri Indira Gandhi, a devotee of Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan making an offering of Thulabharam (18-1-80) with Sugar.

Smt. Indira Gandhi before Lord Sri Guruvayoorappan in a devotional mood.



There is a massive weighing scale at the South by East of the Nadappura. On one scale the devotee is to sit and on the other the offering is to be weighed. It can be anything from firewood to gold. Tender coconuts or plantains or even stones are good enough for Thulabharam. On 18th January1980 the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi offered a Thulabharam in Sugar. (she weighed 55 Kilos). Instances are many when even non-Hindus, Christians-Muslims have offered Thulabharams. On being informed of their interest to offer Thulabharam the weighing scale and the item to be offered, would be taken to the outer limits of the temple-premises, to which the non-Hindus are allowed entry, for weighment, Non-Hindus are not allowed entry into the temple or the use of temple roads close to the temple. Sign-boards around the temple delineate such limits.

The temple authorities themselves have on stock a very wide range of materials that are usually offered in 'Thulabharam'. All that the devotees have to do is to pay the money equivalent of the thing plus the weightment fee; Re-one.

For any clarification or information on anything, connected with the offering, it is better to approach the Temple Manager, whose office is on the podium in the Nadappura to the right of the Main Entrance.

ഭാവിയെകുറിച്ച ഉൽക്കണ്ഠ വേണ്ട

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** ഡെപ്പോസിററ് ഇൻഷൂറൻസിൻെറ സംരക്ഷണം
*** കൂടുതൽ ആദായകരമായ പ്രത്യേക
ഡെപ്പോസിററ് പദ്ധതികൾ

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കെ. എൻ. ഗോപാലൻ
ജനറൽ മാനേജർ.

Offerings

No.	Name of the offerings	Minimum charge		Remarks
		Rs.	Ps.	
1	Palpayasam	1	...	
2	Naipayasam	1	...	
3	Sarkara Payasam	1	...	
4	Rice Nivedyam	1	...	
5	Appam	1	...	
6	Ada	1	...	
7	Avil	1	...	
8	Thiru Madhuram	1	...	
9	Butter Nivedyam	1	...	
10	Sugar & Plaintain	1	...	
11	Thechi Unda Mala	2	...	
12	Thiru Mudi Mala	...	50	
13	Niramala	15	...	
14	Annaprasam	2	...	
15	Bhagavathi Azhal	2	...	
16	Butter after Japam	...	50	
17	Kelikai	2	...	
18	Archana (Purusha Sooktham)	...	50	
19	,, Ashtotharam	1	...	
20	,, Sahasranamam	3	...	
21	Kalabham One Ball	60	...	
22	Kalabham Half ,,	30	...	
23	Sandal Paste	1	75	
24	Nivedya Kooru	...	13	
25	Ghee Lamp	...	50	
26	Thali Pooja	2	...	
27	Thali Kettu	1	...	
28	Oil Abhishekam	2	85	
29	Malar Nivedyam	...	59	
30	Milk Abhishekam	...	10	
31	Marriage	30	...	

(contd)

ശ്രീ ഗുരുവായൂരപ്പ സന്നിധിയിൽ ഞങ്ങളുടെ ഹൃദയംഗമമായ പ്രാർത്ഥനകളും അഭ്യർത്ഥനകളും അർപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ട്

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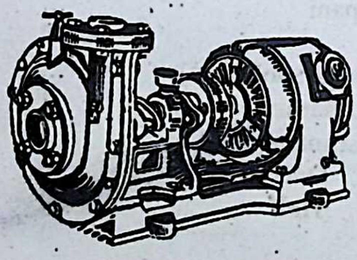

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32 Ashtapathi	...	50
33 Geetha	...	50
34 Bhagavatham	...	50
35 Narayaneeyam	...	31
36 Gayathri Nai Japam	...	60
37 Ganapathi Archana	1	...
38 Sastha Archana	1	...
39 Lalitha Sahasranamam	3	...
40 Palada Prathaman	10	...
41 Iratti Payasam	10	...
42 Namaskaram	600	...
43 Athazham	600	...
44 Udayasthamana Pooja	5000	...
45 Ahassu	805	...
46 Krishnanattam Play	500	...
47 Mala Ital (To Sabarimala)	1	...
48 Kettu Nira (,,)		...
49) Thulabharam (Thattil Panam)	1	...
50) Silver Locket	12	...

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[Temple: 280
[Sathram: 365

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1) 3 A.M. Temple opens for Nirmalya darshan
2) This is followed by Abhishekam, Vakacharthu and Sankhabhishekam
3) About 4-15 A.M. Malar Nivedyam
4) About 4-30 A.M. Usha Nivedyam
5) 5 A.M. Kelikai (beating of drums, etc.)
6) 6 A.M. Usha Pooja
7) 6-35 A.M. Siveli
8) Between 7-30 A.M. and -15 A.M. Milk Abhishekam and Navakabhishekam
9) About 8-30 A.M. Pantirati Pooja and Nivedyam
10) 11-45 A.M. to 12-45 A.M. Ucha Pooja, 11-45 to 12 Naivedyam, 12-45 Darshan for 15 minutes
11) About 1 P.M. Temple closes.
12) 4-30 P.M. Temple opens
13) 5 P M. Seeveli
14) 6-15 P.M. Deeparadhana
15) From 7-30 P.M. Athazha Pooja—Nivedyam for 15 minutes. Thereafter Pooja for 30 minutes
16) Athazha Seeveli
17) Trippuka, eading of palm-leaf containing the day's account by Pathukaran
18) Azhal at Bhagavathi temple
19) 10 P. M. Temple closes for the day

After that Krishnanattam (except Tuesday) is offered by devotees.

On days of Udayasthamana Pooja, these timings will change.

* * *

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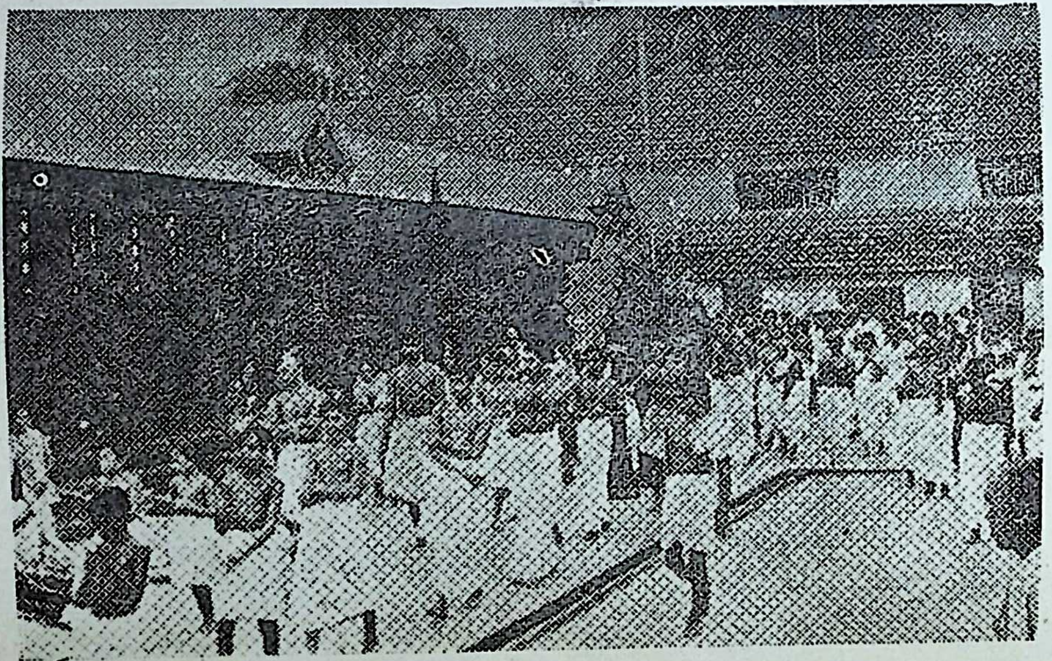

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Elephants of Guruvayoorappan

There is no other Community which loves elephants so much as the Malayalees. And there is no other temple in India which owns so many elephants as the Guruvayoor Temple.. It looks as though elephants are the second love of Guruvayoorappan, the first love being His devotees. At present there are 36 elephants, all offered by various devotees. There is a special ceremony or a ritual for the offer and acceptance of elephants by Guruvayoorappan. It is called "*Nadayiruthal*". The following is the list of Donors and the respective Elephants.

Name of Elephants	Name of the Devotee who offered Elephant	Date
1) Padmanabhan	E. P. Brothers, Ottapalam	18-1-54
2) Gopalakrishnan	Zamorin Raja of Calicut	
3) Lakshmikutty	Desamangalam Mana	
4) Ramachandran	Zamorin Raja of Calicut	
5) Narayanan	M. N. Nair, Calicut	
6) Venugopal	Zamorin Raja of Calicut	14-7-51
7) Kuttisankaran	Chinnakuttan Nair, Kongad	6-12-56
8) Kuttikrishnan	C. C. Velukutty, Calicut	29-11-56
9) Vijayakrishnan	Pootheri, Calicut	15-7-56
10) Ramankutty	Poothilath Raman Namboodiri	17-5-56
11) Ravindrae	Kondaram Valappil Krishnan, Chavakkad	5-5-54
12) Unnikrishnan	Zamorin Raja of Calicut	8-5-63
13) Gopalan	Paravath Narayanan Nair	

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14) Radhakrishnan	Union Timber Traders	24-12-61
15) Thara	Prof. K. Damodaran (Prop. Kamala Circus)	9-6-57
16) Nandini	P. Narayanan Nair, Nilambur	9 5.64
17 Balagopalan	Zamorin Raja of Calicut	9-6-67
18) Umadevi	Sankaramangalath Velayudhan Pillai	9-11-69
19) Lakshmi (Jr-)	K. M. Balagopalan (Prop. Bombay Circus)	11-7-72
20) Narayanankutty	T. R. Chathunuy (Elite Fabrics, Trichur)	23-10-72
21) Devi	M. Damodaran Nair	26-1-74
22) Madhavankutty	Kunnatheeri Narayanan Nair	3-2-74
23) Sathyanarayanan	K. G. Bhaskaran, Ernakulam	21-2-74
24) Gopinathan	Changarath Sarojini Amma	20-5-75
25) Gouri	Kondattil Gangadhara Menon	28-3-76
26) Anjali	T. Madhavan Nair, Kalpaka, Eringhippalam, Calicut	2-9-76
27) Kesavan (Jr.)	Palliyamakkal Ayyappan (P.A.) Unni Jayaprakash Timber & Saw Mills, Chettupuzha Olarikkara	9-9-76
28) Balakrishnan	K. G. Radhakrishnan, Alakapuri, Calicut	3-10-79
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Antiquity of the Temple

According to some scholars, the temple is only six or seven centuries old. Others would push its existence further back. They maintain that the temple has a history of thousand years. One thing is certain; there is no record to establish the exact date of its construction or the name or other details of the person who constructed it.

Some writers are of the view that the western gopuram was constructed in the 12th century. There are some records to show that Sreekovil and the Mandapam were renovated in 1030. Again, records show that the *Koothambalam* and *Nalambalam* were reconstructed 058.

Mr. Puthezhath Raman Menon, an eminent authority on the subject, is of the view that the temple of *Edathariath Devi* was the original temple in Guruvayoor. The legends say that when *Vayu* and *Guru* brought down the Vigraha for installation, the Devi, most willingly yielded place for the deity and herself moved to the left. And thus the appellation "Edathariath Devi"- 'close by to the left'. This being the reason why it is said that a Darshan of the Devi should have precedence in the order of worship at Guruvayoor Temple.

In the Tamil literature of the 14th century mention is made of "KURUVAYOOR TEMPLE". So also, in the *Koka Sandesa* of the 14th century, repeated mention is being made of the temple as "*Kuruvayoor Temple*". From the description given therein we could infer that the lofty laterite walls, gopurams and flagstaff were all there even at that period. There are slokas in *Koka Sandesham* which describe the big crowd at the time of '*Noon Pooja*' even in those days. Thus the temple was acclaimed as a pilgrim-centre even in those distant times. If so, its existence should go down the corridors of time to much earlier times.

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The great Fire

It was on the fateful night of 29th Nov. 1970 that a fire broke out inside the temple gutting everything except the Sree Kovil and a portion of the Chuttambalam. It made screaming headlines in the Newspapers. By around midnight the flames were seen leaping into the sky from the temple; the red-hot copper sheets of the roof glistening in the shooting flames, as though the demon of destruction was laying bare the bloody gums of its omnivorous mouth. The devouring flames were reaching out for the Thidappalli. The dense fumes had spread a huge canopy of black and silver in the horizon and the dazzling light painted the sky-line with red and gold. The cracking and breaking of the tiles provided the pyrotechnics and the loud cries and outbursts of the thousands engaged in the rescue operations rent the air.

When the fire was brought under control all that one could see was the great Sree Kovil standing undaunted like a colossus amidst the ruins sprawling all around; the deity remaining intact, seemingly serene and calm, wearing the last night's *Alankar*, and a beaming smile, as if philosophically viewing the desolation all around.

It was nothing short of a miracle that the licking flames that were dancing all around could not reach the Sree Kovil.

RECONSTRUCTION:-

Soon the massive reconstruction programme was set in motion and a renovation committee was constituted with a team of experts who had made their mark in various disciplines. In the astrological reading it was revealed that it was not to the

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liking of Sree Guruvayoorappan that a massive change was made in the vitals of the temple architecture. Thus it was decided to retain the format as such while renovating the temple with all possible improvements for providing better amenities for the pilgrims. The renovation work proceeded on a war-footing. The Nalambalam, Chuttambalam etc. with all the newly sculptured pillars and the eleven rows of tiny lamps of Vilackumadam etc. are all, part of the renovation. A steady stream of remittances for the renovation was on the flow and the entire work was completed ahead of schedule. The renovation expenditure totalled above 26 Lakhs:

Marking the completion of the renovation there was an illumination on the Vishu Day of 1973 (14th April) when the temple stood flushed in light and in all magnificence.

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Guruvayoor Sathyagraha

In the year 1931, the famous Guruvayoor Satyagraha was launched by the Gandhian followers led by late Mr. Kelappan. The *manjulal* in the East Nada became the platform for the leading spirits of the All-India freedom struggle who advocated the need for throwing open the temple for the Harijans. Thus Guruvayoor shot into All-India prominence in the early thirties.

As the second stage of their campaign, Kelappan started "a fast unto death" Sathyagraha. Late Mr. A. K. Gopalan who emerged later on as a leftist leader, was the volunteer captain of the movement. But soon, Mahatma Gandhi, intervened, and it was called off. However, the temple remained closed for 12 days. Inspite of focusing the public attention on the urgent need for granting temple entry to the Harijans, on all days (not only on *Ekadasi*) on a footing of equality with caste Hindus, a long wait of 15 years had to pass by before the Harijans could gain this goal. Guruvayoor is still a bastion of religious conservatism.

Wisdom dawns late on those who try to air in the closed carriage of conservatism and when the revelation finally comes, those standard-bearers of conservatism will always be in the forefront, to celebrate the triumph of the forces of Progress.

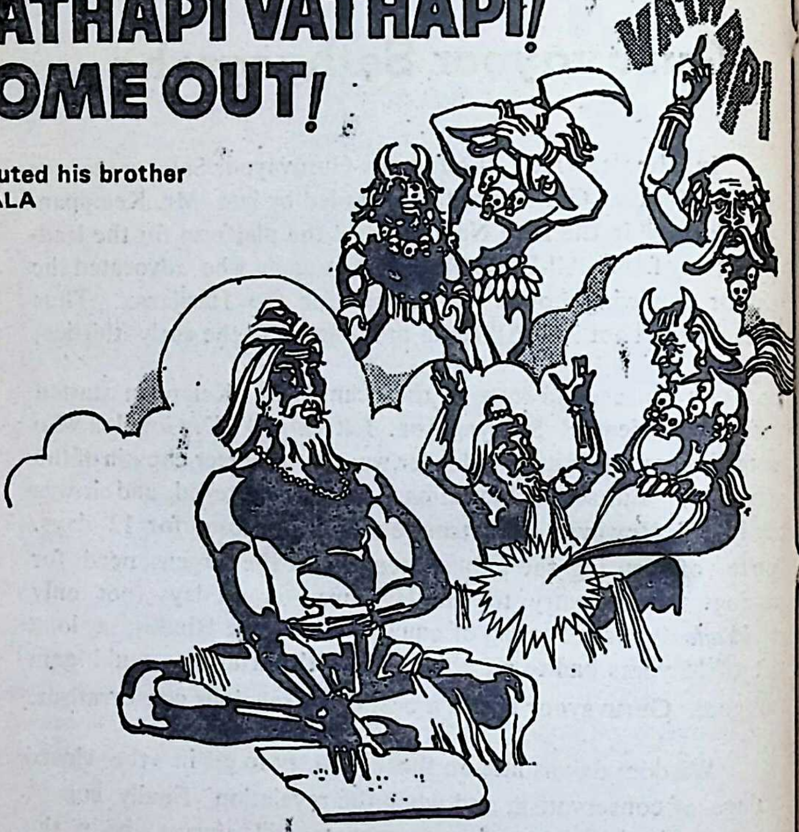
Thus we find today an impressive monument erected right in the middle of the Devaswam Sathram commemorating the event of Kelappan's Satyagraha of 1931.

The plaque on the monument carries a homage paid to the memory of the great historical event.

* * *

VATHAPI VATHAPI! COME OUT!

Shouted his brother ILUALA



Vathapi and Iluala were asura brothers who took uncommon delight in torturing Rishis and killing them. Their modus operandi was simple. Rishis were invited to banquets in which Vathapi's minced flesh prepared deliciously would be served. After the banquet, Vathapi, who had the gift of resurrection, when called upon by his brother, would burst out of the stomach of rishis, killing them. The great sage Augusthiya was also once given a banquet of honour in this fashion. After the sage had consumed Vathapi-meat, his brother shouted.

"VATHAPI, VATHAPI, COME OUT."

But little did the brothers realise that Augusthiya's digestive system was powerful to digest everything including Vathapi. Thus Augusthiya put an end to the evil designs of the asuras.

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ADMINISTRATION

In the initial days of the administration, there were 72 Namboodiries at the driving seat of the administration. Since the Zamorin Raja of Calicut had territorial jurisdiction over Guruvayoor, the Zamorin came to have over-lordship of the temple. The Raja of the principality of Punnathur, as the representative of the Zamorin, used to exercise some control over the set-up for some time. In the big crowd of 72 Namboodiri trustees, the one who towered over the rest, besides the Zamorin, was Mallisseri. Thus virtually Punnathur Raja, as the representative of the Zamorin, and Mallisseri were together running the day-to-day administration of the temple. In course of time, out of the 72 Namboodiris, Mallisseri Namboodiri alone survived as all other families became extinct without descendants. Thus Mallisseri and the Zamorin together constituted the sole governing body of the temple. Following a decision of the Madras High Court in 1930 Zamorin was designated as the Managing Trustee and Mallisseri, the co-trustee,of the temple. When the H.R. & C.E.Act came into force they came under the supervisory control of the H.R. and C. E. Commissioner. Before that, for a shortwhile, (in 1916) the administration of the temple was in the hands of the Court of Wards of Madras as the entire estates of the Zamorin happened to fall under the management of the C. W. As always, a smooth-sail in the administration and a consensus or complete unanimity of opinion in the matter of administration was not possible and more often than not friction and bickerings marked the relationship between the two trustees. But since the Zamorin was the managing trustee and what was contemplated under the scheme was only a consultation with the co-trustee, the Zamorin's "will" always prevailed. From 1927 onwards the Zamorin had the last word in the affairs of the temple. In 1930, the Madras High Court framed a scheme for the management of the temple. This confirmed the position of the Zamorin as the Managing Trustee.

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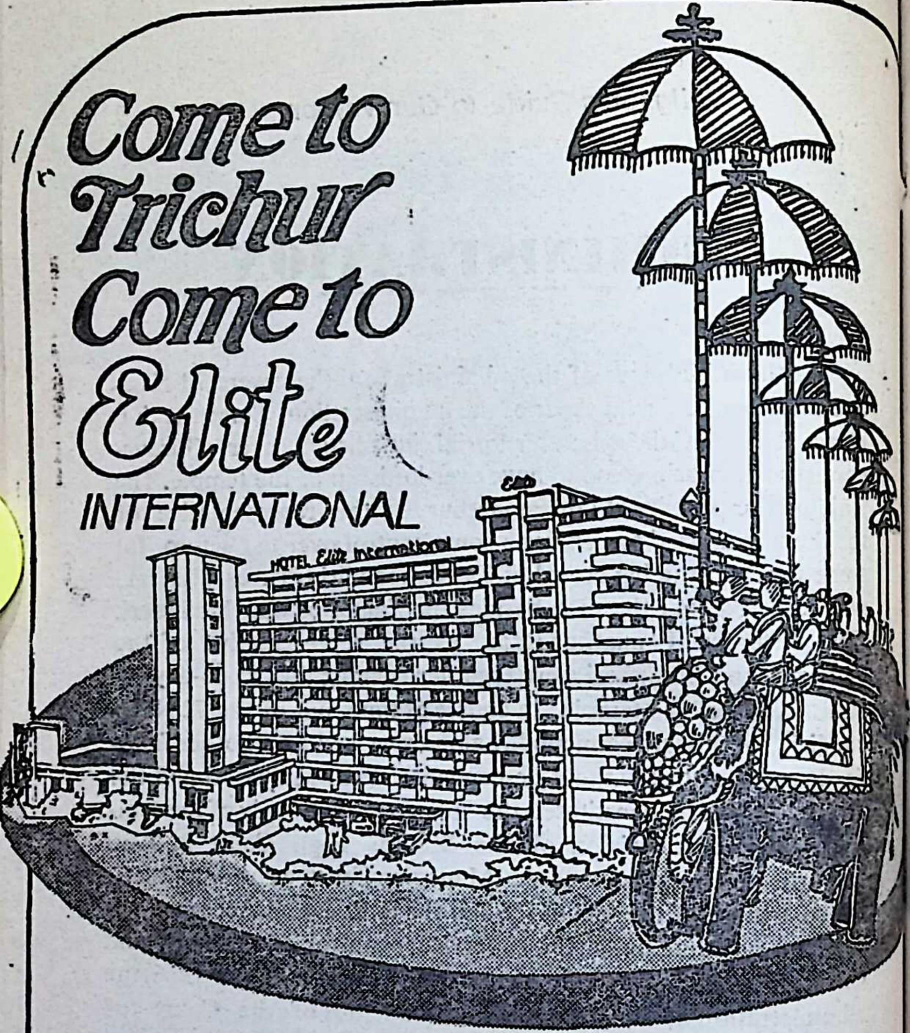

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The Zamorin's office, in course of time became a beehive of stratagem and subterranian activities, as there had been a continued erosion in the economic contents of his office, more so in its revenues. This, naturally compelled some of his dependants in some cases to stoop to do many questionable things and exploit the situation to their advantage without due regard to the larger interests of the Temple or the cherished values of life. The Zamorins came to assume the office at the fag-end of their lives, when they were tended to lean on their kith and kin. And the expected tenure of his office being short, he being too old, those lieutenants of Zamorin, went about making hey when the sun shone. To make matters worse those proxies were in most cases mediocrities with little education and much less culture. Thus the standard of the administration deteriorated steadily. In the reports of Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer Committee and Kuttikrishna Menon Committee, there were many adverse comments on the administrative set up. The media also was unsparingly Campaigning about the need for a change and finally the Government in the year 1971 introduced an Act known as the Guruvayoor Devaswam Act which came into force on March 9. 1971.

As it was, the Act replaced the Trusteeship by a Managing Committee, nominated by the Hindu Ministers on the Cabinet. The day-to-day administration was to be looked after by an administrator appointed by the Government. The committee, ofcourse, included the Zamorin, the Mallisseri Namboodiri, the Tantri of the temple, and a representative of the employees of the temple, among others. The Administrator was to be a Person not below the rank of a Deputy Collector; and he too was to be a member of the committee.

Thus, in keeping with the spirit of the democratic age, the trappings of a democratic out-fit was given to the administrative set up. But soon there was an uproar that the remedy chosen was worse than the disease; and instead of one Zamorin there were 13 of them, with all the evils that had marred the Administration under the Zamorin coming back to roost on the golden flagstaff of the temple, seemingly with a vengeance.

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Some critics even went to the extent of challenging the validity of the Act in a Writ petition and the High Court in its decision struck down the Act with a directive that the Act should be revamped, giving a broader base and a more serious Hindu- Orientation.

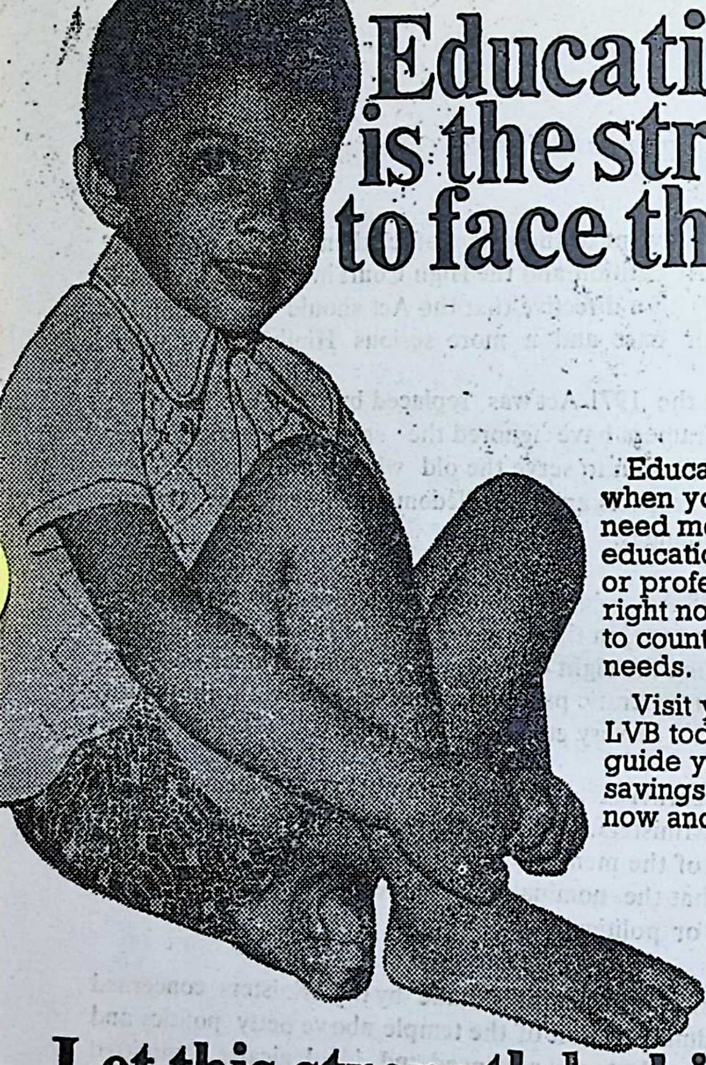
Therefore the 1971 Act was replaced by 1978 Act. But it is a pity that the framers have ignored the spirit of the court'sdirective and have chosen to serve the old wine in a new bottle. The two acts in all respects are Tweedledom and Tweedledee, except for cosmetic changes.

The 1978 Act is in effect more retrograde and reactionary- than the earlier one, in that it gives uncalled for and unlimited powers, including the right of veto, to the commissioner:- a hangover of the bureaucratic past, quite out of tune with the spirit of the time and the very ethos of the temple.

As in the earlier Act, the Mg: Committee is to be nominated by the Hindu Ministers. Unfortunately the choice, and the style of nomination of the members have become brazenly politicised' It is seldom that the nomination is made on considerations other than personal or political.

Unless a conscious attempt is made by the Ministers concerned to keep the administration of the temple above petty politics and to choose the intellectually advanced and . ideologically committed men of proven integrity, the Guruvayoor Devoswam administration will be a continuing flop and it will never be able to deliver the goods. Since Guruvayoor has become a strong magnet attracting pilgrims from all over India, the developmental activities of the place have to progress fast in step with the growth in the pilgrim-population. This necessitates large-scale planning and rational projections, and above all a determination to make every step not only fruitful but also rewarding to the Hindu society, on the whole. For this, a dynamic, flexible and enlightened committee that could rise to the occasion, formulating the policies with a visionary-eye and implementing them with a missionary zeal, has to be at the wheel:- in short a more authentic and less authoritarian one than the one contemplated by the present Act.

Education is the strengt to face the fut



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Other Temples In And Around Guruvayoor

MAMMIYOOR

It is a Siva Temple, considered to be much older than Guruvayoor Temple. After pointing out to Guru and Vayu the sacred place for installing the "Krishna Vigraha" Siva himself moved to Mammiyoor, according to Legends, and made it His permanent abode.

It is about a kilometre to the North-west of Guruvayoor. *Mahasivarathri* is the most important festival here. Though the presiding deity is *Siva* there are other shrines devoted to Subramanyan, Vishnu, Sastha and Vigneswara. Installed in the miniwoods, called "KAVU" is Bhagavathi.

NARAYANANKULANGARA TEMPLE

This is a temple under the jurisdiction of Guruvayoor Devaswam and issituated about half a kilometre to the North of Mammiyoor. It is a Devi Temple (Vishnu Maya). The annual festival falls in makaram. M. E. (January end)

PARTHASARATHY TEMPLE

This is an ancient temple situated about a kilometre to the north-east of Guruvayoor. From the Manjulal at the East Nada it is due north and is distanced by a few metres only. The presiding deity is Parthasarathy. Regrettably, this temple fell into ruins and had remained neglected for long. But a committee of local celebrities including Mr.N. Damodara Menon and Mr. P.V. Radhakrishnan, the leading lights in the social circles and the local

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Bar, has been striving hard to rivive its departed glory. It is said that the Vigraha was consecrated by Adi Sankara more than 1000 years ago. Surprisingly beautiful to look at, the idol is considered a marvel; and more so, as the long period of gross neglect and the ravages of time could not stale or stain or otherwise becloud the beauty of the Vigraha.

Celebration of *Geetha Day*— the Ekadasi day of VRISCHIGAM— is the most important festival day.

THIRUVENKETACHALAPATHY TEMPLE AT TIRUVENKETAM

This is an ancient shrine dedicated to Sri Venketachalapathy of Tirupati. No one knows how old it is. It is believed that the temple was constructed and the idol consecrated by the chief priest of the Tirupati temple himself, as a result of a vision and the prompting he had in a dream. Some atheists who carried fire and sword razed the temple to the ground in the 16th century and it remained for long in a state of neglect. The main idol of Venketachalapathy was relegated to the background with only an inconstant attention from the local people who visited this temple to worship the "Devi" which was originally an upadevata.

However an Astrological reading in 1975 set right things and the perspective was regained. The T. T. Devasthanam authorities also were appraised of the development. After convincing themselves of the historical antiquity and the orgin of the temple, the T. T. D. authorities came forward with a liberal hand for the renovation of the temple. Actively associating themselves with the local renovation committee, a scheme was drawn up for a phased programme of renovation, expansion, and reconstruction and this was inangurated on 2-5-79 at a conference presided over by Smt. Venketachellam, Governor of Kerala at Thiruvenkatam and hosted by the Exective Officer of T.T.D.Mr. P.V.R.K. Prasad, I.A.S.

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The temple is attracting the bulk of the pilgrims who come to Guruvayoor and the re-installed deity is said to be a powerful "*Varadayaka*". As an outpost of the temple of Tirupati this temple is poised for an ascendant glory.

The local committee engaged in the renovation work is presided over by Mr. G.G. Krishna Iyer, a well known and much-respected business magnate of Guruvayoor.

The most important festival is Makara Chovva. And for all the 41 days of Mandalam there are special poojas in the temple.

PERUNTHATTA

Situated about a kilometre to the south of Guruvayoor Perunthatta has an old Siva temple. It is believed that Tippu and his forces camped here. Strange as it may seem Tippu was continuously offering tender coconuts for Abhisheka in this temple during the days of his occupation. This once again proves that Tippu was not an idol-breaker. It is recorded that he made many free gifts to this temple as he did to the Guruvayoor Temple.

The deity is supposed to have great powers to cure snake-bites.

TAMARAYUR

This temple also is under the jurisdiction of Guruvayoor Temple. This is a Vishnu Temple situated about a kilometre to the north of Guruvayoor temple. This is an old temple with a circular Sree Kovil.

NENMINI TEMPLE

About a kilometre to the South-east of Guruvayoor is the Nenmini Temple. Bala Bhadran is the deity here. This temple belongs to the Nenmini Mana, an ancient, aristocratic Namboodiri family held in high esteem in and around Guruvayoor.

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Lodging And Boarding Houses

In the days of old there were no formal lodging houses in Guruvayoor. Those who came to Guruvayoor for Darshan were probably accommodated in private homes of kindly souls. perhaps some informal, homely boarding houses were also there which might have received some pilgrims on a selective basis as paying guests.

The first Devaswam Satram at the East Nada was constructed in 1916. Later on other constructions by the Devaswam followed, all at the East Nada, in response to popular demands. The Devaswam administration, under the stewardship of the Zamorins was never dynamic or far-sighted and it could never keep pace with the tide of the times. This lethargy and inertia of the administration provided an excellent opportunity to entrepreneurs, and thus innumerable private lodging houses sprung up all around.

Of late Guruvayoor has undergone a remarkable change in all facets of its life. The incessant flow of pilgrims from all over India, particularly from the neighbouring states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh has brought in its wake a spurt in boarding and lodging houses. And the presence of so many boarding and lodging houses in its turn brought into being other infrastructural and auxiliary extensions. Shopping centres and petty traders soon teamed up. Restaurants catering mainly to a floating population sprang up, flanking the approach roads to the temple and all around. Because of the market 'forces of life, there developed a demand for more and more posh lodging houses. These demands were squarely met by enterprising

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individuals and business organisations of repute. Mr. M.R. Viswanathan of Meleppura house, an aristocratic landlord and a *persona grata* of the locality was the first to put up a posh lodging house styled as "LIBRA" at the West Nada. And for a long time to come LIBRA was the only luxury lodging house at Guruvayoor. Today the map of Guruvayoor is spotted with a good many boarding and lodging houses, some really posh and rewarding, while the bulk are only so-so With a steady increase in the pilgrim population and an upswing in the reputation of the temple, with its spell, Guruvayoor fast graduated to become a great Pilgrim centre of the South, next only to Tirupati. And once it acquired a reputation as a Pilgrim Centre it started attracting tourist traffic and this induced the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation to move into the picture with a sizeable investment and a task force. Their Tourist Bungalow at East Nada, is one of the elegant establishments and they have been maintaining the standard expected of them in service

The peak periods in the year when the number of pilgrims swells beyond capacity in contrast with the normal days are the Mandalam, Vaisakham periods, and on Ekadasi (in mid Nov. Dec) Occupancy of these posh tourist homes as well as the less important lodging houses will be full and would be booked far in advance.

ELITE TOURIST HOME

Situated at the East Nada, at the most strategic spot of importance in Guruvayoor is the Elite Tourist Home. It is managed by one of the leading business organisations based at Trichur and headed by a many-sided business magnate Mr. K.S Chathunny. Elite Tourist Home is only one of the chain Tourist Homes, managed by the "Elite" Organisation.

Rooms: Single —5—Rate Rs. 14/- Double —37— Rs.25/- A/c—3 Rooms—Rs. 52. 50, Family—4 (3 Bed & one 4 Bed) Rs. 35/- There is a A/c Restaurant "KONARK" which is a gourmet's attraction. Phone: 215 (5 lines).

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SREE KRISHNA BHAVAN

Situated at Manjira Road, that links the temple to Mammiyoor (15 Metres from Temple Tank) Sree Krishna Bhavan is a neat, decent lodging house with all facilities for conducting marriages and marriage parties, in the modern, as also in the orthodox style.

For the Lodgers there is a canteen attached, where you get all vegetarian items of food at moderate rates.

ROOMS: Single Rooms—4 Rate Rs. 8/-, Double Rooms—27 Rate Rs. 15/- Family Rooms—10— (3 beds) Rs. 20/-, 2 Dining Halls, and all facilities for conducting marriages.

The Hotel and Restaurant, Sree Krishna Bhavan at East Nada is their sister concern. Marriage parties are conducted there also. For personnel contact:- Mr. O.K.R. Menon, Mg. Partner- Sree Krishna Bhavan. Phone: 241(GVR) & 221(Chavakkad)

Mr. O.K.R. Menon is a moving spirit in Guruvayoor social circles, and is associated with very many social organisations besides being the President of Congress (I), Guruvayoor Mandalam.

LIBRA TOURIST HOME

Situated at the West Nada,Libra is a posh lodging house patronised by the discerning section of pilgrims and tourists. Noted for the quietude and the quality of service LIBRA enjoys appreciable occupancy at all seasons and full occpancy at peak periods.

Rooms:	19 Double Rooms	Rs. 12.50
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	4 Family ,,	,, 24.00 each

There is no boarding facility but courteous and obliging attendants see to it that all your requirements are arranged at your rooms as per order.

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Telephone	266
	267
Chavakkad	268

Personal contact:-

Mr. M.R. Viswanathan
Personal phone: 327 (Chavakkad)

DEVASWOM SATRAM is the first preference of all who want proximity to the temple and an inexpensive lodging.

There is no boarding facility offered by Devasthanam and there is no restaurant or hotel under the direct management of the Devasthanam. This irksome inconvenience has now been largely surmounted because of the presence of INDIA COFFEE HOUSE, inside the Satram compound. Though they don't serve light meals as they do at Thirupathi other usual items are there. They are open from 5 A. M. to 1 P. M. and 4 P. M. to 9 P. M. Their service is excellent and the Coffee and dishes very good. Phone: 231 (Gvr)

ROOMS IN THE SATHRAM COMPOUND, EAST NADA

EAST BLOCK -- 51 Rooms

Single rooms (with 2 beds Rate Rs. 10/-
Bath attached Additional bed Rs. 2/- each
Single bed single rooms -- 10 Rs. 5/-

CENTRAL BLOCK

10 rooms double-bedded Rs. 10/- each-- Bath attached

SOUTH BLOCK --- 36 Rooms.

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(Common Latrine) 32 Rooms Rs. 3/-

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3. The charming Guruvayoor Tourist Bungalow
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There are two halls for marrige parties, One in the Sathram Hall and the other in the T. C. Block. Rooms can be booked in advance by making remittances to the Administrator, Guruvayoor Devaswom, Guruvayoor, detailing the requirements in the M. O. Coupon. Phone; 365 (gvr)

FREE SATHRAM AT SOUTH NADA;

This is a newly Constructed Sathram. The description is quite misleading. It is not free as is likely to be understood by the term. Nothing is free at Guruvayoor. This one is offered at concessional rates. There are 12 rooms there, each meant for a minimum of 6 persons -- Rate Rs. 6/- each room. Further, there are 108 berths in 3 halls (the dormitory) in 2 tier style For each berth Re. 1/-

Tourists and low-income groups avail of these facilities.

TOURIST BUNGALOW AT EAST NADA;

There are no single or family rooms but only 53 double rooms Rate; Rs. 22/- For single occupancy, Rs. 14.30

They undertake catering for marriage parties. Rs. 10/- per head (with 2 payasams) Telephone; 266 (gvr)

RAMAKRISHNA LODGE;- Situated right in front of the Temple, with hotel and restaurant in the ground floor, Ramakrishna Lodge offers excellant boarding and lodging facilities to those who love close proximity to the temple and not-too expensive an accommodation.

For marriage parties with medium budget R. K, Lodge is an ideally suited, 4-storeyed Lodging House with a row of rooms and a common hall in every floor.

Single rooms -- 13
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All rooms are self-contained. (The rental ranges from Rs. 7-50 for single to Rs. 35/- (Family) Phone: 278 (GVR)

RUGMANI KALYANA MANDAPAM ;- This also is situated at the East Nada, a few yards off the main road. This insulates it against the din and bustle of the mainstreet. There is enough parking space for a good number of vehicles.

There are 30 self-contained double rooms, spacious halls for conducting parties and all facilities for conducting marriages in the orthodox style. The Kalyana Mandapam at the Centre and a balcony at the 2nd floor from where the marriage function down below could be viewed is the singularity of the R, K. Mandapam. The constructional activities of the 3rd floor are progressing fast. Phone;357 GVR

NENMINI BUILDINGS :- Situated right in front of the temple and opposite to R. K. Lodge is the 3-storeyed Nenmini buildings with a row of rooms in the upstairs. Down below there is a Shopping Complex with the Hotel & Restaurent SRI KRISHNA BHAVAN at the eastern end. Rooms are neat, clean and moderately rated. Telephone: 276 GVR

Many other super - luxury lodging houses are under construction. At the S. Nada the Devaswom itself is putting up a posh one for V. I. P; Quarters, (5 storeys). In the sathram compound another 5-storey building is under construction.

At the South Nada another complex known as R. V. Complex with a shopping centre is coming up, on a big scale.

Besides the above there are very many Lodging houses about which we have not referred to, as our intention is not to give an axhaustive list of all and Sundry.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS
TIRUPATI

WOULD YOU LIKE TO FEED THE POOR AMONG THE LORD'S DEVOTEES AT TIRUMALA?

The Hindu religious literature is replete with legends about the sanctity of poor feeding. Feeding the poor devotees of the Lord, in a holy place like Tirumala is particularly propitious. Equally auspicious and popular is the custom of distribution of the Lord's prasadams to his devotees.

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams have now introduced a scheme-Sri Venkateswara Nitya prasada Dana Endowment Scheme - by which you can distribute either food packets or laddus or Vadas to Pilgrims to Tirumala.

You make an endowment of Rs.500/- to the T. T. D. The annual interest on it will be utilised either to feed 20 poor pilgrims or distribute 201 laddus or 15 Vadas to pilgrims in the que lines.

The distribution will be done as desired by you on any one day of the year, as specified by you -your birth day, wedding aniversary day, your son's or daughter's birthday, your father's or mother's Sraadhaday, any day of sentimental value to you.

Any number of endowments can be made by a donor and each endowment can be on a different day, as desired, Those who make a minimum of 20 endowments will be provided free darsan for a family of five Persons on the notified day valued Rs. 125/- per year on the basis of the present cost of five special Darsan Tickets:

The name and gotra of every donor will be read out at the Koluvu (daily ritual of notification to the Lord) on the due donation day.

The actual distribution will start from 17th March 1980, Telugu New Year's day, and endowments will be accepted with immediate effect.

Your contribution to this also earns exemption from Income Tax and you may kindly quote this while claiming Income-Tax relief in your assesment.

Donations may please be sent through the branches of Andhra Bank, all over India, or by D. Ds of any bank, in favour of the Executive Officer, T. T, Devasthanams, Tirupati to;

The Manager, Andhra Bank Ltd., 11—1—122, Gandhi Road, Tirupati- 517501 with the following particulars.

Name, Gothra / family name and full address of the Crihastha / Donor Item to be distributed,

Date on which the distribution is to be made.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
TIRUMALA - TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS,
TIRUPATI.

GURUVAYOOR AS A TOWNSHIP

Guruvayoor is a township. The extent is 7,476 sq. kms the standing population is 24600 as on 1-3-'79. But the floating population goes on waxing and waning and peaking to a record crowding on festive days, particularly on days like Ekadasi. Interestingly the crowd easily melts away in a matter of a few hours or overnight.

One redeeming feature about this place is that it is easily accessable by road transport. Railway facility is apparently in the pipeline. The nearest railhead is Trichur 28 k.m. to the east To those coming from Mangalore side the nearest Railway station is Kuttipuram, 52 k-m. to the north-east.

There has been an incessant cry to place Guruvayoor on the Railway map of India but the Centre has been viewing this with an apathy and indifference; so much so, that it has become an elusive proposition. A preliminary survey conducted to establish the feasibility was still-born. Though the project is now being exhumed from the burial ground in that a resurvey has been provided in the 1980-81 Budget, it looks as though the ordeal of a long wait of a few decades may have to be gone through before this much-needed convenience becomes a fait accompli.

As for Road transport there is no other station as Guruvayoor in Kerala where so many routes converge. Umpteen buses are plying from here to various destinations and a few inter state lines are also being operated between Kerala/Tamilnadu and Kerala/Karnrtaka. There are regular services from here to places like Coimbatore, Palani, Madura, Bangalore and Mysore, besides Guruvayoor being a hardcore in a network of intrastate routes.

The Bus timings — both K. S. R. T. C. and the private lines — are detailed infra.

Late Sri. P. R. NAMBIAR. When we take stock of the innumerable Bus services and the fleet owners of modern Guruvayoor, we may do well to pause and look back for a while in appreciation of the high-minded service and humble beginnings made by a pioneer in the line; late Mr. P. R. Nambiar of Guruvayoor. It was late Mr. Nambiar who braved all odds and started the first service from Guruvayoor to Pattambi, way back in 1930 in what can be described as a Mini-Van which accommodated hardly 8 passengers. In those days it was quite an hazardous venture to have thought of operating any bus service and it is said that there were days when Mr. Nambiar found it hard to get even as many as four passengers who could afford to pay the fare and enjoy the luxury of a ride in a ramshackle mini-bus. A devotee as he was, he lived long enough to see his hopes brought to fruition. And he left behind a fleet of Buses plying to various destinations under different names and styles. Again, it was late Mr. P. .R Nambiar who installed the first generator set and supplied energy for lighting temple premises by electricity. The Deepasthambha (tower of light) at the Western Gopuram was Mr. Nambiar's offering.

ECONOMY :

Guruvayur and the neighbouring town of Chavakkad and other villages that sprawl around are all Gulf-pockets with a booming money - order economy depending on remittances from Gulf States.

Industrial potentialities are there in abundance all around but neither the Govt, nor the entrepreneurs have yet addressed themselves, with any awareness of the urgency, to the task of industrialising the area by tapping the resources.

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EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS:

Guruvayoor Devaswom is managing a first grade College Sree Krishna College, and a High School, Sree Krishna High School. The College was started in the year 1964 (July)

The College is situated at a place called Arikanyur 2 km. to the east of Guruvayur. The place has a halo of historical antiquity, with the renowned "*Umbrella Stones*" and the intriguing "Caves" supposed to be the ancient hermitages of sages.

OTHER INSTITUION AROUND GURUVAYOOR:

Besides the above, there are the Govt. High School, Chavakkad; the M. R. Raman memorial High School Chavakkad, Convent High School Mammiyoor and Little Flower College for women, Mammiyoor.

KENDRIYA SANSKRIT VIDYAPEETAM at Pavaratty is an ancient institution. Presently it has come under the management of Central Govt. In this institution instruction is imparted in Sanskrit, even for post-graduate courses. A committee is at the wheel of management. Guruvayoor Devaswom had purchased a few acres of land at Dwaraka Beach, Chavakkad for locating this institution, but it looks as though the issue became politicised and the Vidyapeetam was Shifted back to the premises of the old Sanskrit School. Expansion programme is reportedly afoot.

LITTLE FLOWER COLLEGE FOR WOMEN:

This was started in 1955. It is a College for women, managed and administered by the Sisters of Clarist Congregation of the Trichur`Diocese. The College offers instruction for University previous, B. A. and B. Sc. Degree Courses.

There are quite a good number of L. P. and U. P. Schools in and around Guruvayoor.

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COURTS:-

A Munsiff's Court and a IInd Class Magistrate's Court are functioning at Chavakkad.

DOCTORS & MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS:-

The Devaswom is managing an 8-bed Hospital and an O. P. Dispensary at East Nada, near Manjulal. Dr. U. C. G. Namboodiri B. Sc. M. B. B. S. is the Doctor in-charge. (Phone: 295 (GVR) The devaswom has an ambitious plan on its anvil to organise a full-fledged hospital on a grand scale. Besides the Devaswom Hospital, there is a Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital at East Nada.

DR. MAHESWARAN BHATTATHIRIPAD B. Sc. M. B. B. S. is another Private Medical Practitioner of good repute in Guruvayoor. His dispensary is at East Nada, Guruvayur. Phone: 275.

GOVT. HOSPITAL

In Chavakkad there is a GOVT. HOSPITAL and a private Medical centre styled as CHAVAKKAD MEDICAL CENTRE. Besides these there are a good many private Medical Practitioners in Chavakkad area.

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SCHEMES NEEDED:-
A ring-side View

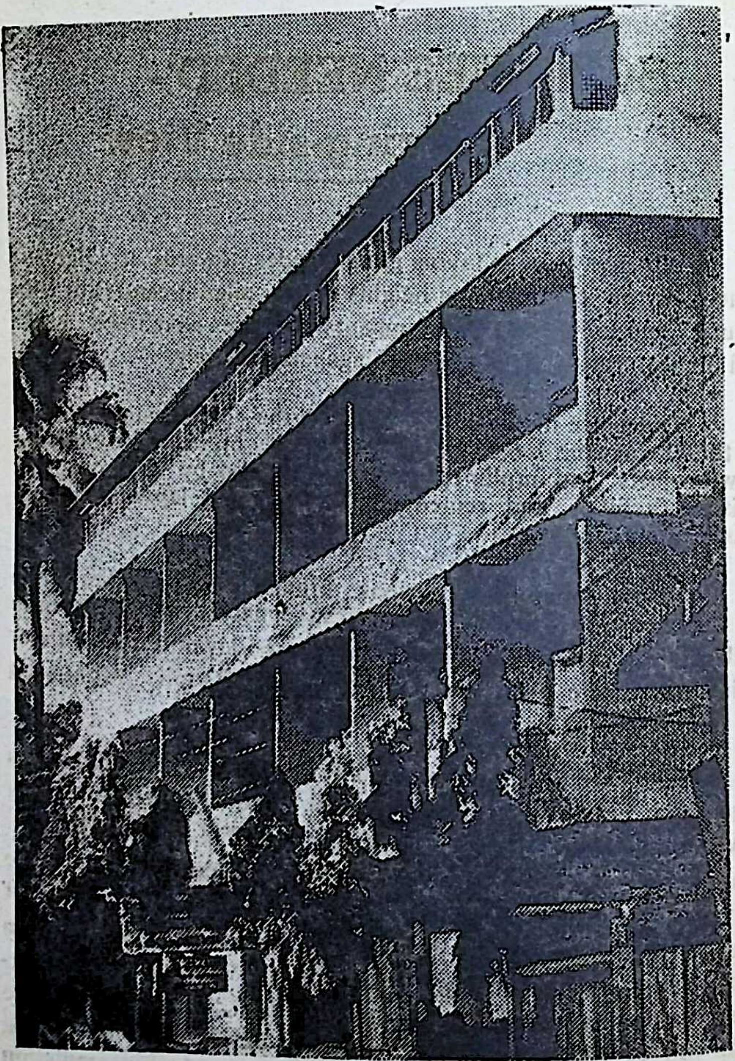
Guruvayoor is taking giant strides towards its rightful place on the commanding heights of the pilgrim-centres of the South, and no doubt, developmental activities have to be initiated on a grand scale, planning things imaginatively.

There are many things to which the immediate attention of the Devaswom has to be turned, not only by way of conceiving new projects and implimenting them. but also by improving the existing facilities and remedying the faults and lapses that are found to stick out.

When one takes a look around what strikes one on the face of it is that the administrative machinery has patently fallen into a rut and has become much too loyal to the "Peter Principles". To place the administration on its rail is the need of the hour.

The case of the temple tank is in point. The tank has its legendary halo. It is beleived that Lord Siva performed his TAPASYA there and hence its honorific RUDRA THEERTHA. That is the legendary part of it. But its modern history is none too edifying .Leave alone the grim account of the heavy toll of human lives it has taken, the water of the temple tank has been perpetually and unberably stinking in the nostrils, posing serious health - hazards to those who bathe in it. The water in the tank can be kept clean always by various devices. The swimming pools in star-Hotels make an interesting case study for emulation

The public and the pilgrims alike have time and again. brought this to the notice of the administration. But none is more blind than the one who refuses to see. Instead of initiating steps to ensure cleanliness, they have installed a crude, vulgarised version of what is described as KALIA MARDANAM



SREE KRISHNA BHAVAN LODGING AT MANJIRA ROAD, GURUVAYOOR.

at the Centre of the tank at great cost. Aesthetieally flat, the thing inspires nothing but disgust.

The roads that are rimming the temple are in permanent disrepair. The authorities have been [speaking from housetops about their programme to acquire the lands adjoining the temple, but things have been moving at snail's pace. (The Managing committee should meet more often and it should take a more lively interest in the day - to - day administration.)

Devaswam is running an 8/- bed hospital and an O. P. ward. Considering the magnitude of the resources of the temple this is too small a service to merit even a mention. It is time the Devaswom embarked on a programme, on a fitting scale.

Since the days of Narayana Bhattathiri, Guruvayur has aquired a name as a resort for the cure of Rheumatism. Hence an Ayurvedic Centre or even a College can be thought of, and if need be, in close association with Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakal. Arya Vaidyasala being a charitable Trust may mix well with the Devaswam's interest and the outcome may be a gigantic organisation in the real service of the Society.

HINDU UNIVERSITY:

There are very few religious institutions of the scale of public patronage and financial self-help, in India, which can compare with Guruvayur Devaswam. Naturally it falls to the lot of the management to do something by way of return and liquidate its indebtedness to the millions who are votaries of theHindu religion.

To ensure that the culture and substance of the Dharma are preserved, it is material to preserve the vedic, sastric, sculptural, puranic, "Agama-Sastra" and related studies so that the interest in these may be sustained for posterity. This can be well achieved by starting a school for Oriental Studies.

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The Subsidiary systems of knowledge like Ayurveda, Kathakali, Bharatha Natyam & Carnatic music ean also be imparted at this Centre.

It will be worthwhile to enlist the help of SANTANA DHARMA GURUS in this respect.

PLIGHT OF POOR PILGRIMS. On Sankramana days, and other festive days, the floating population of this temple-town, is rather too unwieldy and pilgrims are stranded on the roads leading to temple-, sometimes even blocking the corridors and passages. Let alone the question of getting accommodation, there is even the risk of loosng personal effects. This can be temporarily alleviated by converting one or two large rooms at the Satram into cloak rooms at some nominal costs for the pilgrims. (This should be in addition to the existing one)

The lateral-roads (Thekke nada and Vadakke nada) are irritants to the beholder from the point of hygeine. Literally they have been converted into way-side urinals by the under-privileged. It is suggested that some unrinals/public conveniences be provided right at the spots to prevent clandestine "nuisances" as pilgrims cannot be expected to go far to attend to nature's calls.

Rains bring relief to farmers. But the rains of Guruvayoor do not harbinger any relief to the stranded pilgrims, whose plight is all the more worsened by urchins fetching accommodaion for "consideration" and in this bargain the less-well-to-do are the worst-affected. If the present structures and shelter at the East Nada can be further extended up to the Sathram with sufficient roofing to protect from lashing rains from sides as well, a humanitarian task will have been completed This, will go a long way in practically eliminating a lot of avoidable hardships to the pilgrims who are over-night visitors to the temple. (Somtimes they suddenly arrive by nights by transport buses and private carriages without any prior knowledge of the magnitude of the crowd and accommodation problems)

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5. **HELP TO OTHER KERALA TEMPLES;** If the suggestion for the oriental school is implimented, sufficient persons can be trained up for priesthood, architecture, sculpture, music (Nadaswaram, Panchavadyam, etc.) for service in the other temples. The Devaswom can also earmark a particular amount for the arrangement of daily pujas in nearby temples that are in a dilapidated condition. This will provide also avenues for moral upliftment of society and in some cases generate employment opportunities too.

Regarding the religious side of temple activities, we have a couple of suggestions :-

ANJANEYA :- Of late, one can see the emergence of a pleasing Murthy in the pantheon of upadevas, meticulously sculptured in one of the pillars at the North sf SREE KOVIL, compelling attention by his ever-joyful form with one hand wielding the "GADA" and the other, hand signifying "ABAYA". "ANANDA BHASHPAM" sparkles in his eyes. The Murthy alluded to is the great RAMABHAKTHA HANUMAN, one of the CHIRANJEEVIS, self-visitor to places of Rama-Nama-japam. This particular Murthy has enshrined himself in the bosoms of Bhaktas and acquired an improvised make-up and provision for lamps etc. Still, the authorities are in blissful oblivion, not giving Him the status and recognition He deserves in the form of regular PUJAS. This state of affairs is deplorable as the people have already started worshipping the deity - ofcourse not as per prescription, laid - down by Sastras. To increase the spell of His blessings, as also of Lord Guruvayoorappan, this deity should be properly enshrined, anointed, consecreted and worshipped, if necessary after a PRASNAM.

ILLUMINATION AT BHAGAVATHY'S SHRINE :-

After the great fire, mentioned elsewhere, in the wake of a new popularity, the Udayasthamana Pujas are now-a-days performed almost every alternate days throughout the year.

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Previously it was a stray incident occuring once a week or once a fortnight, depending on the availability of a donor Bhaktha. Of late, even on non - Udayasthamana Puja days. the illumination and special procession during night seeveli with 3 elephants is almost a ritual. This being the state of affairs, and the income of the temple ever increasing, it is certainly worth the thought to provide some special lamps at the Bhagavati temple entrance which falls on the circumambulatory path of Lord's procession: Atleast, it is suggested, that 108 lamps may be provided on the illumination days.

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Other Attractions Around

CHOWGHAT :- Guruvayoor forms part of Chowghat Taluk, in Trichur District. Chowghat has a history, unique and ancient. Three km. to the west of Guruvayoor by the side of Cannoli canal, is Chowghat (Chavakkad), the headquarters of the Chowghat taluk. The semantic shade is derived from "Sapakkad" meaning the forest of curse. Today, Chavakkad is a Municipality in the offing. There has been a boom in the money - order economy of this place as a result of remittances from Gulf States, and it is called the Dubai of Kerala,

The mausoleum of Haidros kuttee, Haider Ali's lieutenant, is situated in the Manathala desam near Chowghat. Disgusted with his master's oppression, Haidros Kuttee is said to have revolted and died in battle. Another site near the Chowghat mosque was the scene of his death and both places are regarded as sacred centres by the local Muslim population. Because of its association with Haidros Kuttee, Chowghat is also called "KUTTINGAL."

PALAYUR:-

At Palayur, about 1 km. fro m Chowghat on the Enamakkal road is the Romo Syrian Christian church, known as PALAYUR CHURCH which, according to tradition is one of the seven churches founded by St. Thomas on the West Coast. It is believed that the Apostle preached in the church.

The church has preserved even to this day the sacred vessels and other articles said to have been used in the temple which is believed to have been converted into the church. About half a K. M east of the church are the foundations of a fort. When it was captured from the Mysoreans by Col. Hartly in 1790 he mounted 15 guns. Close to this Romo Syrian Christian church is a a garden known as Jews Hill, once

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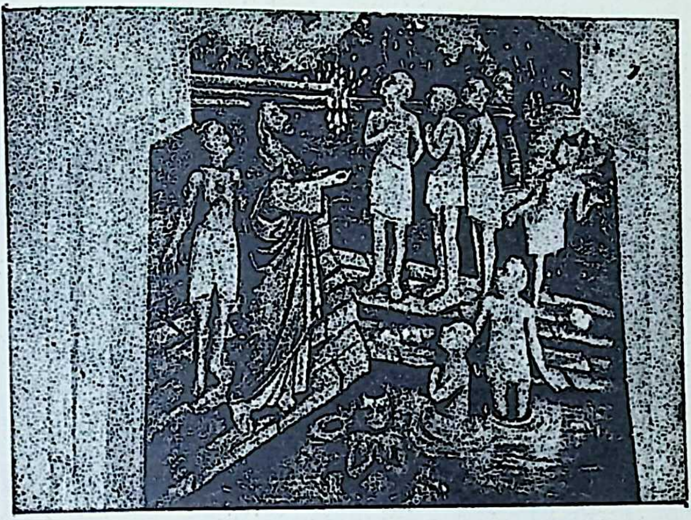
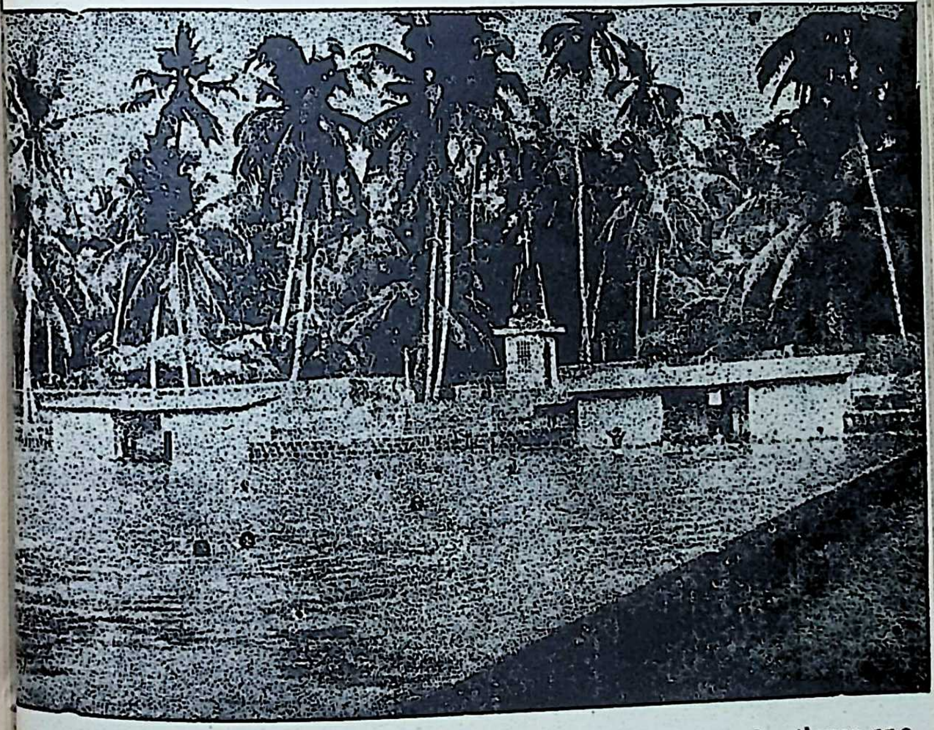


St. Thomas converting the Brahmins of Palayur.



The present Church vard of Palayur where the old idols and antiques are still preserved in a Museum.

the site of a Jewish Synagogue. When the Jews left the locality they offered an adjacent plot of land to a Tiyya on condition that he would place a lighted lamp on the site of the Synagogue, every night. According to the Malabar District Gazette this custom was kept up till the beginning of the present century.

Palayur, which is known as Palur in the ancient European records, was a flourishing centre of trade in the beginning of the 1st century of Christian era. There was a vigorous sea trade between the West coast of India and the Roman Empire in the first and second centuries, From the writings of Periplus (60 A. D.) from pliny (77 A. D.), and Ptolemy (40 A. D.) we know that India was well known to the Jews, Greeks and Romans at that time. Pliny has mentioned the name of Palur in his gazetteer as a commercial centre. The jewish Chronicles and legends talk about Palayur, Cranganore and Cochin as centres of Jewish settlements in India. "Juda Kunnu" in the vicinity of Palayur church remains even today as a remnant of this Jewish settlement.

Palayur was, in those days, a famous Brahmin Station inhabited by Namboodiri Brahmins and other high caste Hindus of the time with a principal Siva temple end several other shrines dedicated to various Hindu deities. At present there is not a single Brahmin house to be found at Palayur; nor have the Brahmins any interest in this place. St. Thomas converted many.

"Those who were not baptised left the place, at once saying "Iniyathe Kuli Vammanat." They presumed that the temple and the tanks at Palayur were polluted on account of the conversion of their brothren there. The Palayur village and its surroundings were cursed by them as "SAPA - KADU" Even to this day the locality is known as Chavakkad which is also spelt as Chowghat. Every native of this place irrespective of caste and creed knows the derivation of the name, Chavakkad,

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The word and its origin is attributed to the so called curse. These factors strongly support the traditional belief that St. Thomas performed a miracle at 'Thaliyakulam'' and converted many Namboodiri Brahmins to Christianity. (It is said that he threw up a handful of water and the water remained suspended in the air, glistening like beeds).*

The edifice of the sacred temple of Palayur which was converted by St. Thomas into the FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF INDIA was believed to have been built on a stone foundation, with wooden walls and roof of sandal and teak."

---Courtesy --

(*Words within the bracket are ours.)

PUNNATHUR (Chavakkad Taluk)

Situated in Guruvayur region, Punnathur is the site of the Punnathur Fort or 'Kotta', the residence of Punnathur Nambidi. The 'Kotta' erected between 1754 and 1758 A. D., is a low tiled building enclosing an open courtyad, with its spacious garden adjoining temples and tanks; a typical residence of a Malayali chiftain. There are, a 'Kalari' (gymnasium) and 'Nadakasala' beside the main building. The door opening into the 'Nadumuttam' is adorned with the most intricate and skilful carving and vignettes. The estate record room contains a wealth of old documents written on cadjan in 'Kolezhuthu' characters. Among the most interesting are the ancient treatises on carpentry and the cure of snake-bite and various old 'kanam' and other deeds dating from as far back as 1736 A. D. The area around the 'kotta' (Fort) is called Kottapadi. At present the place is used as the Sanctuary for the Elephents of Guruvyoor temple.

PORKALAM (Talapilli Taluk)

Situated 9 K. M. to the north of Guruvayoor is Porkalam. It has some historical importance as it had figured in the wars between the Zamorins of Calicut and the rulers of Cochin-

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Culturally also much importance is attached to the place as it was the birth place of the Payyur Bhattatiris. It is said that many meetings of famous poets like Uddanda Sastri and Kakkasseri Bhattariti took place here. Hence the place is also called 'Veda kkad, meaning the forest of the 'Vedas'. An image of a seated Buddha, kept and worshipped over a heap of burial stones in a corner of the temple, also testifies to the antiquity of the place.

KUNNAMKULAM (Talapilli Taluk)

Cherlayam and Kakkad, suburbs of Kunnamkulam, were the seats of the Ayinikur Nambidi and ,Kakkad Karanavapad' respectively. The pre-historic site of Porkalam is situated 4 K.M. to the north of Kunnamkulam. The remains of an old fort are also to be found near the place. The town is the chief centre of Jacobite Syrian Christians in the District and there are several of their old churches in the town and neighbourhood.

MATHILAKAM (Chavakkd Taluk)

Mathilakam is named after the ancient temple Trikkana Mathilakam -- the "Kunavayil Kottam" of Tamil literature. Parasurama is believed to have founded the temple for the use of the Trikkanapuram "gramam" (village). In the early centuries of the Christian Era Trikkana Mathilakam was a Jaina stronghold. Many important temples in the Trichur District like those at Irinjalakuda and Trichur were at one time subordinate to it. The temple is said to have been destroyed by the Dutch. Mathilakam was in the past a centre of learning and a forum for expression for different schools of thought on Philosophy and religion, though there are no relics here at present to remind us of its ancient glory.

CHETTUVAI (Chowghat Taluk)

Five miles due south of Chowghat, the Chettuvai river and connected backwaters find an outlet to the sea, and the island of Chettuvai (Chetwai) or Manappuram (sandy land) is

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formed there. The Dutch were the first to settle here; but they left the place in favour of the English in 1691. In 1714 the Dutch returned but they were ousted by the Zamorin and it was not till 1717 that they formally resumed control of the region. Their fort situated in Engandiyur Amsom was named Fort william, and the death on February 2, 1729 of its first commandant, Heer Wilhelm Blasser, Captain Lieutenant, is commemorated by a tombstone now preserved in Chowghat taluk Office

TRIPRAYAR :- Otherwise called the Benares of the South for its ideal location on the bank of the Triprayar river in Nattika region. 15. K.M south of Chettuvai, The Triprayar temple is dedicated to Lord Sri Rama. The temple is under the management of the Cochin Devaswom Board. Its important festival is the Triprayar Ekadasi held for three days in *Vrischigam* (November — December) every year.

CRANGANORE (Cranganore Taluk)

It is a place of great historical interest. Cranganore was a great emporium of trade even before the dawn of the Christian Era. Situated at the confluence of the Periyar river system with the Arabian sea, it possessed in the past unique facilities for trade and commerce within and without. The Jews, the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Romans and the Arabs came here successively with their merchant fleets to exchange their goods for those of Kerala. Ivory, sandal-wood, peacock's feathers and cinnamon used in Solomon's court are believed to have been exported from here. Cranganore was then the gateway of India. To the Greeks and Romans it was known as 'Masuri from the ancient temple whose Goddess was called "Masuri Devata" on account of her power to ward off small - pox - a belief held even to this day. The Roman colonists are said to have founded here a temple in honour of Augustus. With the march of time the place became such an important centre of trade that in the first century of the Christian Era Pliny described it as "the first emporium in India". Early Tamil poet celled it 'Muchiri'. Later it was known alternatively as Muisy-

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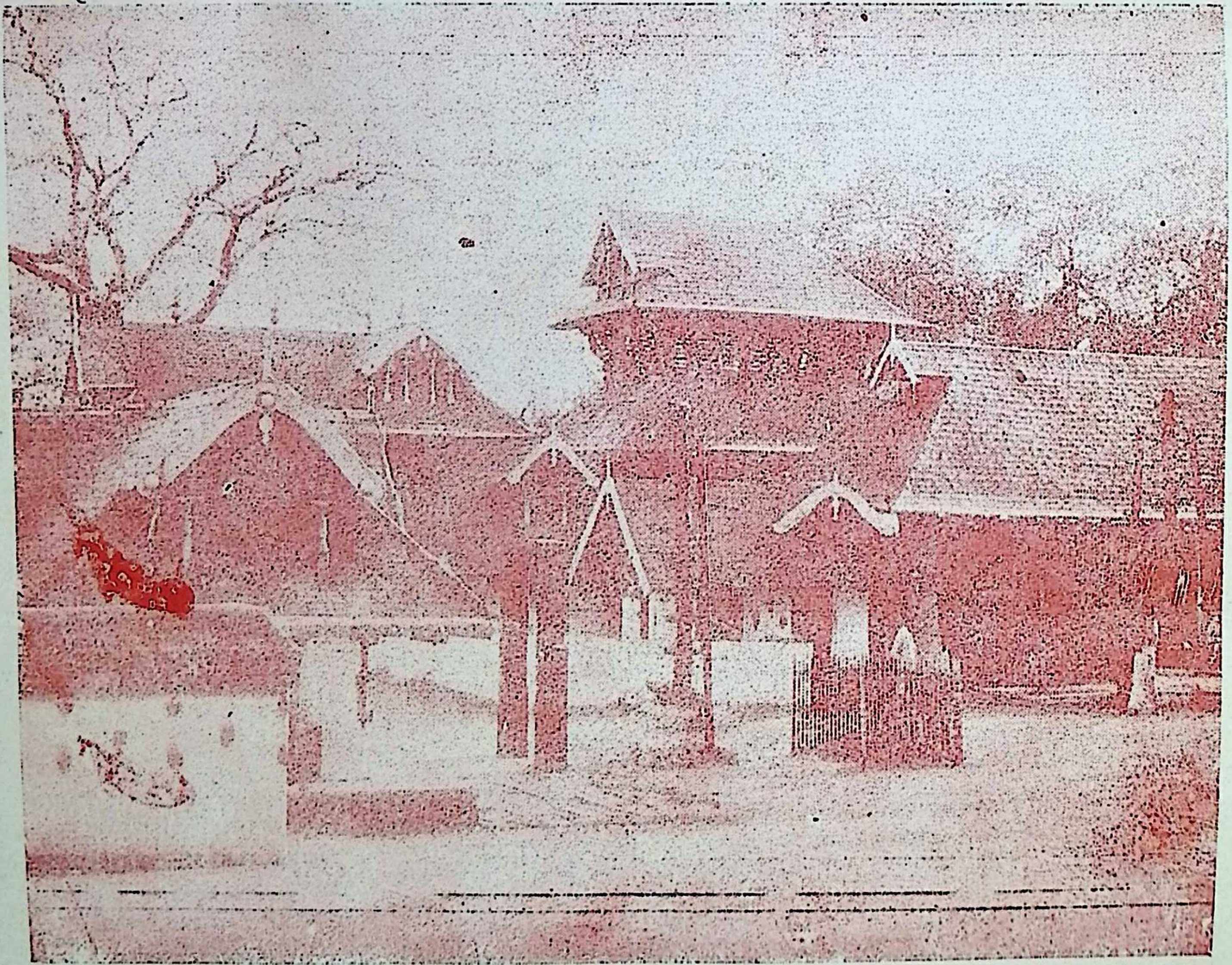
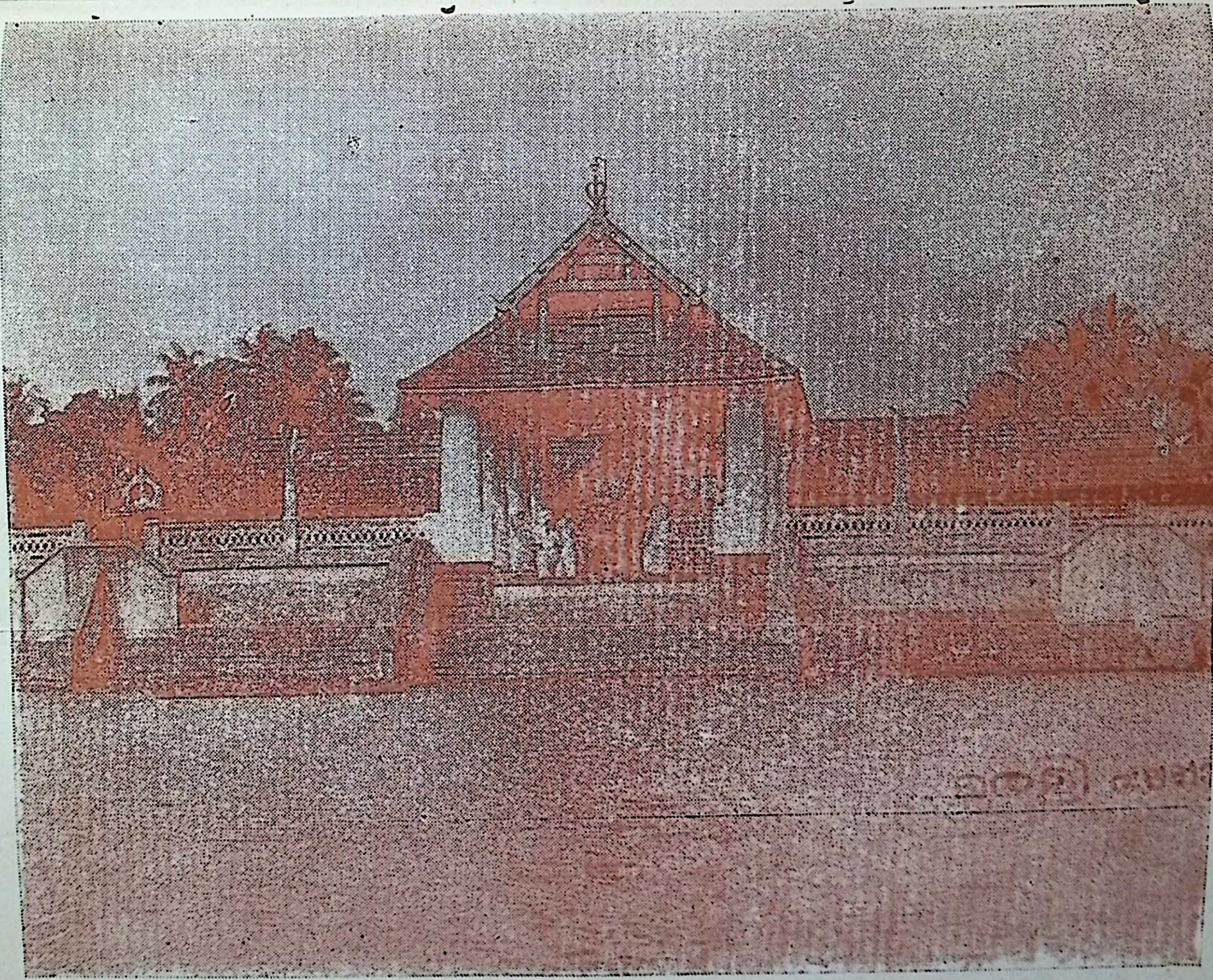
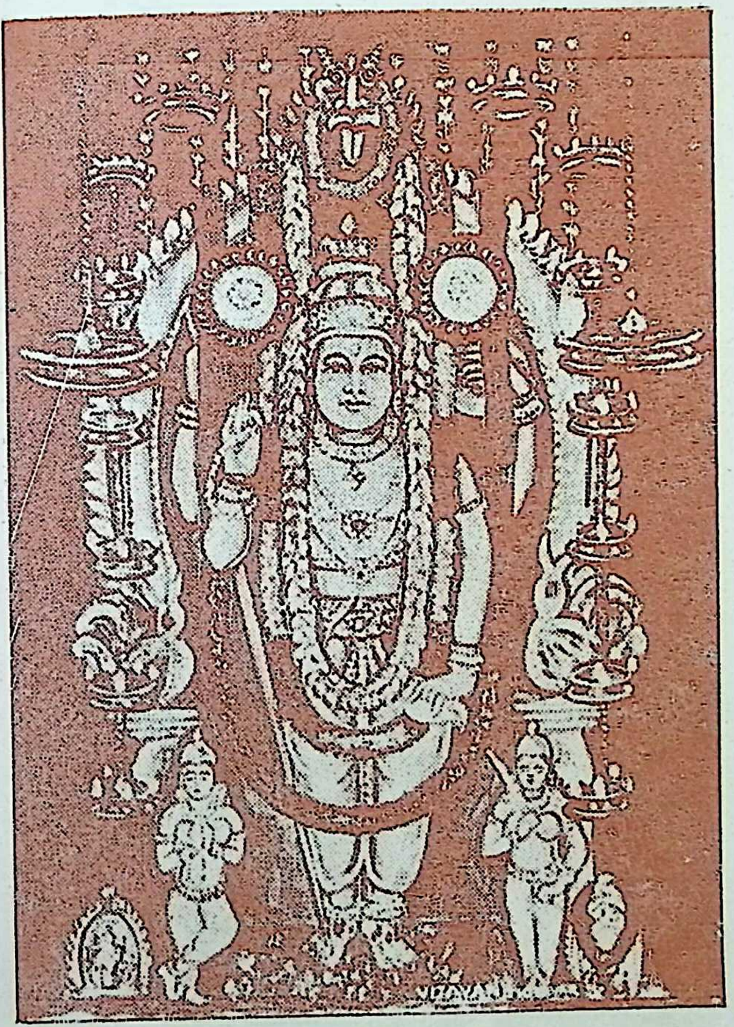


Kodungallur Temple

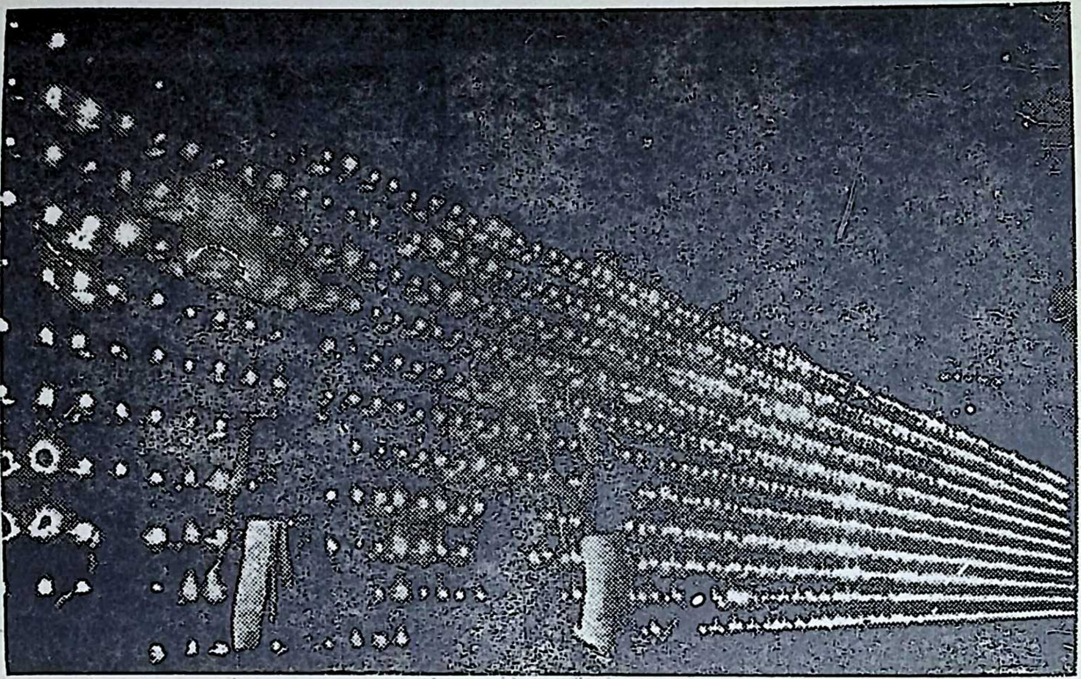


Thriprayar Temple



Thriprayar Thevar

Sree RamaVigraha at Triprayar



VILAKKUMADAM

(Illumination on 14th April 1973 marking the completion of the renovation) rikodu, Makotai or "Mahodayapuram." The Jews, Christians and Muslims all alike claim it as the place of their first settlement in India. The port and its suburbs figure prominently in early Chera history. According to some scholars Tiruvanchikulam in Cranganore was the capital of the Chera-king of the Sangam age.

Cranganore has its own historic temples, mosques and churches. The temples of Tiruvanchikulam and Kurumba Bhagavathi situated here are noted for their antiquity, As for the temple of Cranganore, it is believed that it was founded by the mythical Chera emperor Senguttuvan, the hero of *Silappathikaram*. The *Bharani* festival in Cranganore takes place in the month of *Meenam* (March—April). As the virgin Goddes Kali enshrined here is supposed to preside over small-pox and cholera, a pilgrimage to this temple during the festival is considered to be a potential deterrent to infectious diseases. Rice, salt, chillies, curry stuffs, beatle leaves and comnuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. A distinguishing feature of the festival was the recitation of a series of obsence songs sung with arrant effrontery, but this practice has now ceased. Some years ago the Goddess was also propitiated by the sacrifice of cocks. The popular idea was that the greater the number of cocks sacrificed. the greater the efficacy of the pilgrimage. Hence there was great competition in this orgy of bloody sacrifice. At the end of this gruesome ceremony, the whole temple-yard was a vast expanse of stinking blood. The cock sacrifice took place outside the pagoda precincts though within its outer boundary. The pilgrims had access only to the outer precincts of the temple. This practice was discontinued with effect from 1954 A. D. in pursuance of the provisions of the Travancore-Cochin Animal and Birds sacrifices prohibition Act of 1953 (Act VII of 1953), and hence at present the pilgrims simply let a cock fly in front of the altar as a symbolic act. A fair Is also held in connection with the festival.

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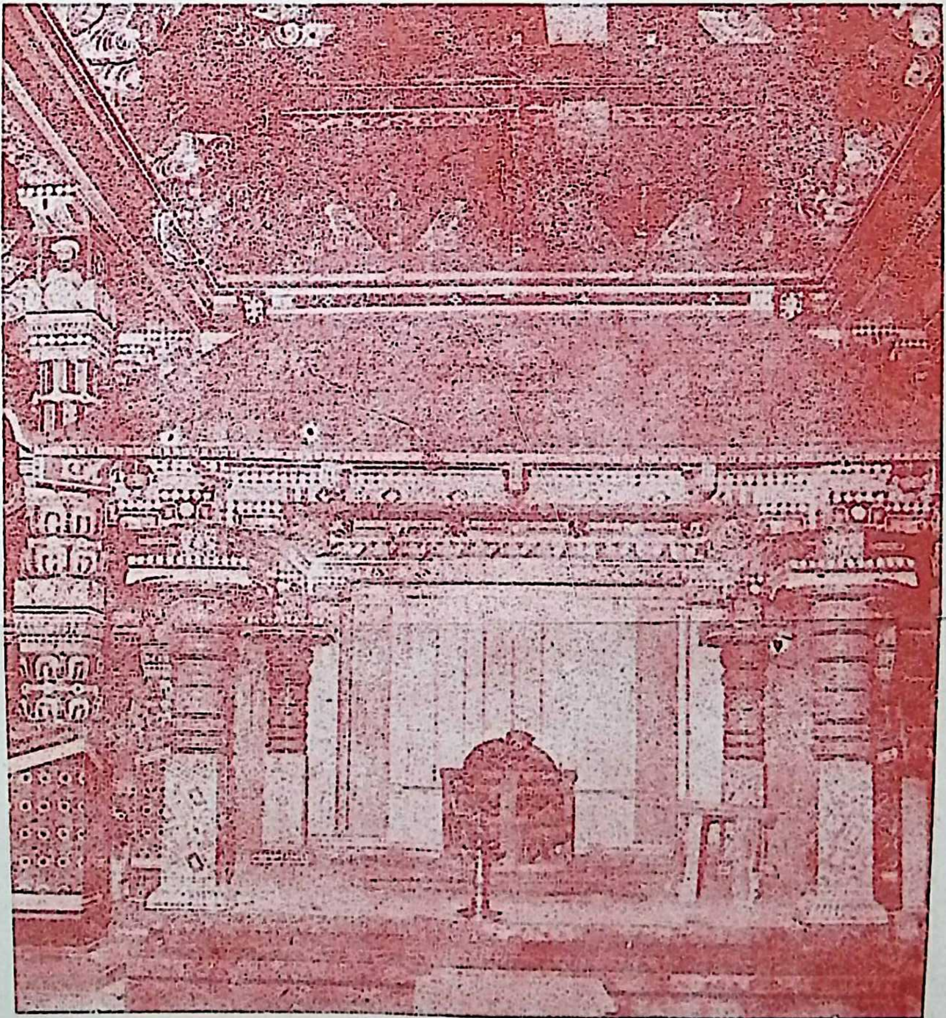
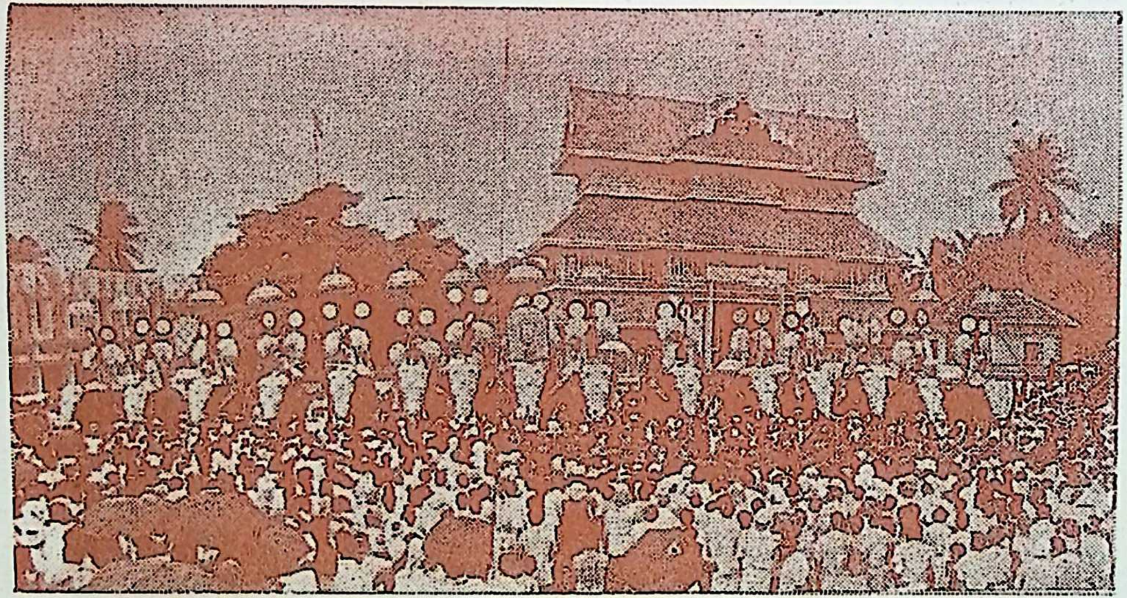
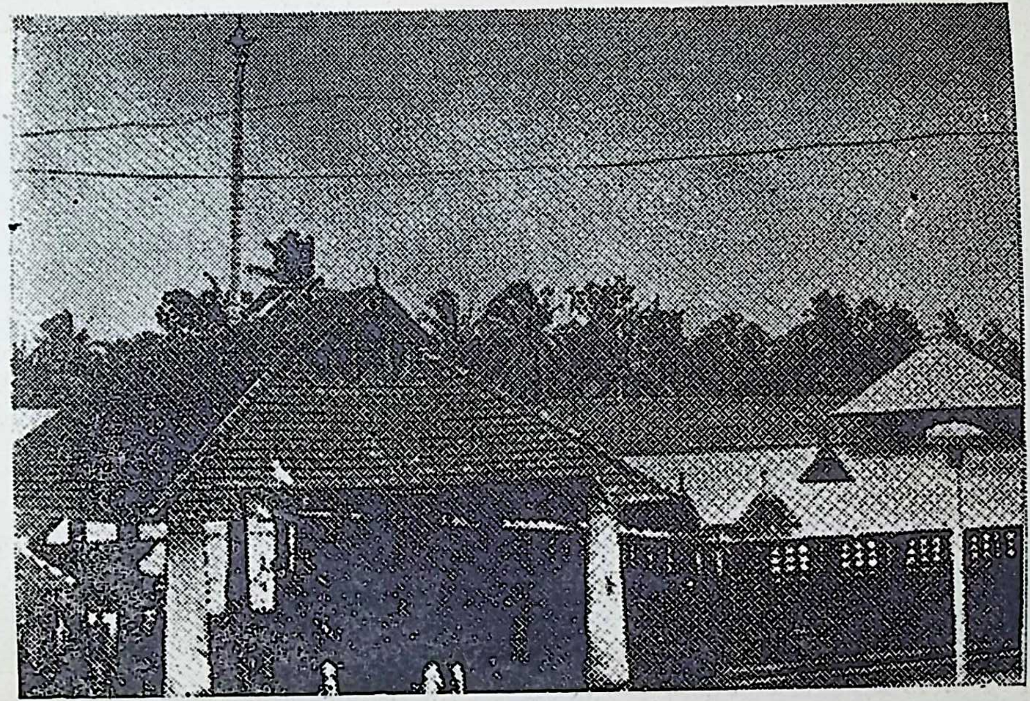


KOOTHAMBALM GURUVAYUR



TRICHUR POORAM



An Aerial View of the Temple, showing Flag staff, Nadappura andSree Kovil

TRICHUR (Trichur Taluk)

The town is built around a hillock crowned by the famous Vadakkunnathan (Siva) temple. The temple, believed to have been founded by Parasurama, is one of the oldest in the State. It is here that Parasurama manifested himself before he disappeared for ever. According to tradition it was in this temple that the parents of Sri. Sankaracharya prayed for an issue. Sri. Sankaracharya is also believed to have laid down his mortal coil within its precincts. The temple, one of the largest and best endowed in the District, contains several sacred shrines and is enclosed by a thick masonry wall, with four lofty GOPURAMS. It is a classic example of the Kerala style of architecture. Most of the structures, particularly the gopuram (with elaborately ornamented gables), the KOOTHAMPALAM and central shrines contain exquisite vignettes of wood carving.

TRICHUR POORAM:

The annual Pooram festival in Medam (April—May) which consists of processions of richly caparisoned elephants from various neighbouring temples to the Vadakkunnathan temple attracts a large number of spectators from different parts of Kerala. The most impressive processions are those from the Krishna temple at Thiruvambadi and the Devi temple at Paramekkavu, both situated in the town itself. The festival was introduced by Saktan Thampuran (1789—1805).

The Thiruvambadi temple too was a Devi temple in early days. It is in honour of Devi that *Pooram* is celebrated there. The consecration of Sree Krishna in that temple is of later origin. In course of time greater importance was shown to Sree Krishna than Devi. There are many such instances in Kerala. The Thiruvambadi Pooram is conducted not in honour of Sree Krishna; the *Thitambu* carried in procession is of Bhagavathy. Also, the temple flag is hoisted in honour of Bhagavathy. But the *Kolam* (figure) held on the elephant's back is of Sree Krishna. This is one of the strange contradic-

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tions found in the Trichur Pooram festival. Vadakkunnathan is but a mere spectator in this celebration. He is a host granting the use of His premises and providing convenience for the festival. No offering is received, no expenditure incurred and no special pooja is offered in this temple in connection with this festival. Lord Vadakkunnathan never comes out of His abode. For Him, there is no Utsavam or other celebrations. Even during the Sivarathri celebration which is the most important ceremony of this temple, He is not taken out in procession. The Pooram festival is celebrated annually in Medam (April—May)

CHERAMAN JUMA MASJID,CRANGANORE :-

Cheraman Perumal went on a pilgrimage to Arabia accompanied by a group of Arab traders who were on their return journey to Arabia after a visit to Adam Mountains in Ceylon. He met Prophet Mohammed at Jeddah and embraced Islam and the Prophet re-named him as Thajuddln. Thajuddin became a close friend of Malik-ibn-Dinar, the king of that place and the latter in turn gave his sister Rajiya Beebi in marriage to the former. They settled down at a place called Mukhalla. Perumal fell ill there. From his death-bed he wrote many letters addressed to various rulers of Kerala and entrusted Malik-Ibn-Dinar to hand over the letters to their addressees and to propagate the tenets of Islam in the soil of Kerala.

After the death of Thajuddin (Cheraman Perumal) Malik-Ibn-Dinar set out for Kerala with an entourage consisting of the members of his family and some friends. He handed over the introductory letters written by Cheraman to the addressees. The first among the rulers he met was the Raja of Cranganore. Because of the high esteem and admiration he had towards Cheraman, the Raja promised every help and extended all facilities to the royal guests. The *Arathali temple* situated east of Arakulam was left at the disposal of the guests

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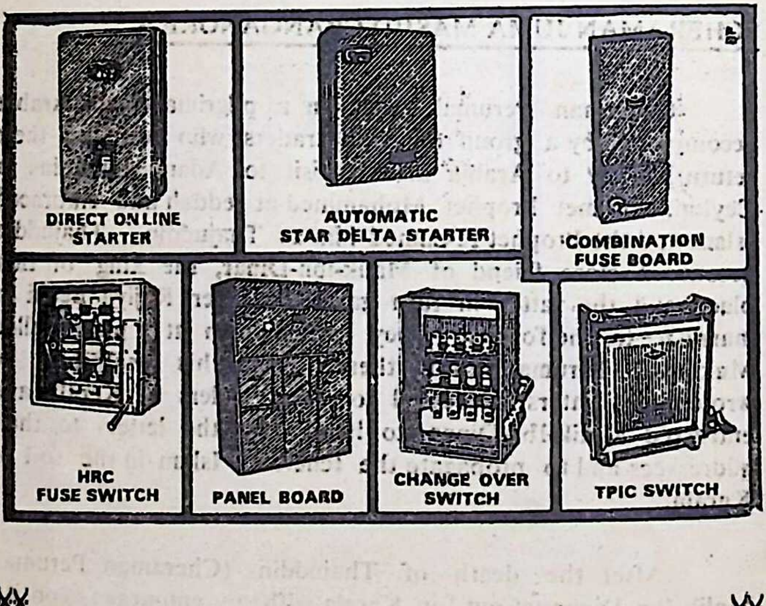
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Cheraman mosque atCrangannore.
The first mosque in India. It was originally a Hindu Shrine.

[illegible]

for their residence and for conducting prayers. They started conducting prayers and sermons to propagate the new faith. The response of the people was heartening. The need for a Juma Mazjid became evident. Certain modifications were embodied in the old *Arathali temple* to suit the needs of a Juma Mazjid and Juma prayers were started for the first time in India. Thus originated the first Juma Mazjid in India. Thus, like the Palayoor church- the first church in India- the first *Juma Mazjid* in India was also originally a Hindu temple. One Singularity about this Mosque is that it faces the EAST unlike others.

Research Scholars of the present day do not subscribe to the View that Perumal went to Mecca and embraced Islam. If he had so embraced Islam that would have changed the History of this Sub-continent. The evidence in support of the Conversion theory is nil and there has been no trace of the letters supposed to have been written by Perumal after conversion: The overwhelming evidence discounts the conversion theory.

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,,	06-30	Quilon Via. Trichur, Ernakulam; Alleppey & Kayamkulam.
,,	07-00	Chottanikkara Via. Trichur, Alwaye and Ernakulam.
,,	07-30	Ernakulam Via. Trichur and Alwaye.
,,	08-30	Chottanikkara Via. Trichur, Alwaye and Ernakulam.
,,	08-50	Trivandrum Via. Trichur, Ernakulam and Quilon (from PPDI)
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,,	12-30	-do-
EXP.	12-30	Trivandrum Via. Ernakulam, Alleppey and Quilon.
F. P.	13-15	Ernakulam Via. Trichur & Alwaye.
,,	14-00	Ernakulam Via. Trichur, Irinjalakuda and Alwaye.
,,	14-45	Thekken Guruvayoor Via. Trichur, Ernakulam, Alleppey & Kayamkulam.
,,	15-45	Ernakulam Via. Trichur & Alwaye.
,,	17-30	Chottanikkara Via. Trichur. Alwaye, and Ernakulam.
,,	18-30	Kayamkulam Via. Trichur, Ernakulam and Alleppey.
,,	19-30	Chottanikkara Via. Trichur & Ernakulam.
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F.P.	04-00	Pathanamthitta Via. Trichur, Muvattupuzha, Thodupuzha & Palai.
,,	04-30	Punalur Via. Trichur, Muvattupuzha, Kottayam & Pathanamthitta.
,,	05-30	Kottarakkara Via. Trichur, Kottayam and Chengannur.
,,	08-00	Chengannur Via. Trichur & Kottayam.
,,	09-45	Kottayam Via. Trichur & Muvattupuzha (from Kozhikode)
,,	14-00	Chnganacherry Via. Trichur & Muvattupuzha.
,,	15-00	Erumely Via. Trichur, Muvattupuzha, and Palai.
LS FP	15-30	Punalur Via. Trichur, Kottayam & Chenganur.
F.P.	16-00	Kottayam Via. Trichur & Muvattupuzha (from Kozhikode)
,,	16-30	Kottarakkara Via. Trichur, Kottayam Chengannur.

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F. P.	09-00	Palani Via. Trichur and Pollachi
EXP.	14-00	Palani Via. Trichur & Pollachi (T. T. C)

TO MYSORE

EXP.	09-15	Mysore Via. Perinthalmanna, Nilambur. (Karnataka)
F. P.	14-20	Mysore Via. Perinthalmanna Nilambur.

TO KOZHIKODE, CANNANORE & PAYYANNUR SIDE

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„	05-15	Kozhikode Via. Edappal and Kottakkal
EXP	06-30	Cannanore Via. Edappal & Kozhikode
F. P.	07-00	Payyannur Via. Perinthalmanna, Malappuram, Kozhikode & Cannanore,
„	08-00	Sulthan Battery Via. Edappal & Kozhikode.
„	08-40	Kozhikode Via. Edappal & Kottakkal
„	10-15	Kozhikode Via. Edappal & Tirur.
„	11-15	Kozhikode Via. Perinthalmanna & Malappuram.
„	12-30	Cannanore Via. Edappal & Kozhikode
„	15-30	Kozhikode Via. Edappal Kottakkal
„	17-15	Sultan Battery Via. Edappal, Tirur and Kozhikode.
„	17-15	Kozhikode Via. Ponnani and Kottakkal

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EXP	21-45	Kasergode Via. Edappal, Kozhikode Cannanore & Payyannur.

TO PALGHAT SIDE

ORD.	05-00	Palghat	Via.	Chelakkara, Pazhayannur & Peringottukurissi
F. P.	05-45	Palghat	„	Shornur & Ottappalam
„	08-15	Palghat	„	Cherpulassery & Kongad
„	09-00	Palghat	„	Shornur & Ottappalam
ORD	10-00	Palghat	„	Erumapetty, Chelakkara Lekkidy.
F. P.	11-30	Walayar	„	Pattambi. Ottappalam & Palghat.
ORD	13-30	Palghat	„	Chelakkara, Pazhayannur
F. P.	13-15	Palghat	„	Shornur & Ottappalam
„	16-15	Palghat	„	Cherpulassery & Kongak
„	17-00	Palghat	„	Shornur & Ottappalam
ORD	18-00	Palghat	„	Erumapetty & Chelakkara
F. P.	19-00	Palghat	..	Pattambi & Ottappalam

ORDINARY SERVICES FROM GURUVAYOOR

04-50	Kottappuram	05-45	Trichur Via.	Kanjany
05-30	Azhikode	08-15	„	Parappur
06-10	Kottappuram	08-45	„	Kanjany
07-45	Kodungallur	10-00	„	Kottekkad
08-30	Kodungallur	12-35	„	Kanjany
09-30	Kottappuram	12-40	„	Parappur
10-50	Azhikode	14-00	„	Kottekkad
12-00	Kottappuram	15-30	„	Parappur

With Best Compliments From

JANATHA BOOK TRADING Co.

Guruvayoor Road

KUNNAMKULAM.

With best compliments from:-

SURABHI DRUG CENTRE

E. Nada

GURUVAYUR

With best compliments:-

HANUMAN TRADING Co.

ALLEPPEY.

13- 00	Kodungallur	18-00	„	Kottekkad
14-00	„	20-50	„	Parappur
14-50	Kottappuram			
15-00	Kodungallur	10-00	Tirur Via.	Althara
15-50	Kottappuram	16-30	„	„
16-30	Azhikode	05-30	Pudupponnani Via,	Chowghat
17-00	Kottappuram	08-40	-do-	
17-45	Kodungallnr	12-30	-do-	
20-20	Kottappuram	15-10	-do-	
07-20	Chettuva chwt.	18-20	-do-	
08-20	„	08-30	Mayannur Via.	Kunnamkulam Waddakkanchery
08-55	„			
17-00	„	17-00	„	
18-35	„	10 30	Kangampuzha Via.	Kunnamkulam and Thrithala
05 00	Palghat Via. Chelakkara, Wadakkenchery	19 45	-do-	
10 00	Palghat Via. Kunnamkulam and Erumappetty.	07 55	Ponnani Via.	Althara
13 00	Palghat Via. Chelakkara.	16 00	-do-	
18 00	Palghat Via. Kunnamkulam Erumappetty	19 55	-do-	

With best compliments from:-

AMRUTHA LODGINGS

E. Nada,

GURUVAYOOR

With best compliments from:-

PALAI TIMBERS

ALLEPPEY.

SWARAJ TIMBER Co.

&

WOOD INDUSTRIES

Swaraj Nager, CHAVAKKAD.

Phone: 668 (Chavakkad)
Res: 74 (Poovathur)

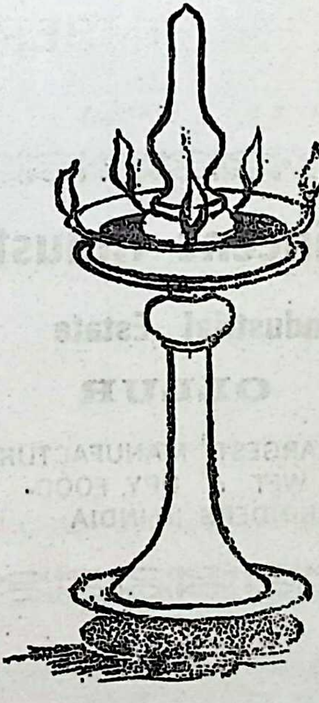
TRAIN TIMINGS:

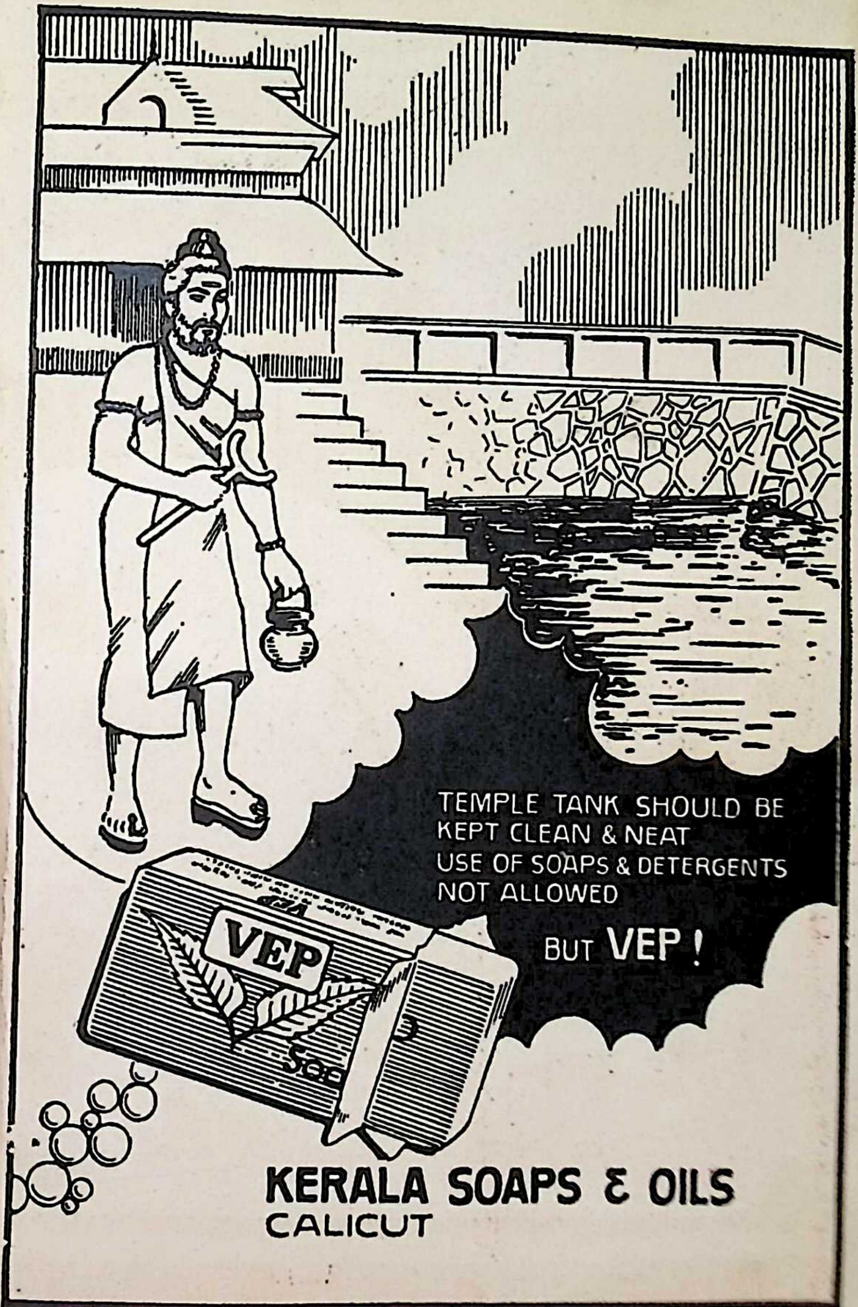
(Train timing from Trichur and the No. of berths that could be booked from Guruvayoor Out-Agency.)

There is a Railway Out-Agency at Guruvayoor and a limited number of seats and berths are allotted to this Out agency. Ofcourse they are too inadequate to be of any real service to the pilgrims and have to be increased drastically.

No, of train :-

By	49/131 Jayanthi	3 Berths	Dep,	12-25		Delhi
,,	25 Island Exp.	2	,,	17-45	,.	Bangalore
,,	82 Janatha Exp.	4	(Bombay)	15-45	,,	Bombay.
,,	20 Mail	12 ., (from 15-4-80 Trivandrum Madras Mail)		18-50	;,	Madras.
,,	42 Cochin Exp.	5	,,	22-03	,,	Madras.
,,	48 Cannanore Trivandrum Exp.	2 2 Seats	,,	20-40	,,	Trivandrum.




VEP
Soap
TEMPLE TANK SHOULD BE
KEPT CLEAN & NEAT
USE OF SOAPS & DETERGENTS
NOT ALLOWED
BUT VEP !

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CALICUT

THE ONLY SOAP THAT CARES FOR YOUR SKIN
-NATURALLY-

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&
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WEDDING REQUIREMENTS
& WEDDING GIFTS
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